

SANT RAVIDAS
AND
HIS TIMES

DARSHAN SINGH
(Macauliffe Memorial Gold Medallist)
Lecturer, Guru Nanak Dev University
Evening College, Jullundur

Sant Ravidas

KALYANI PUBLISHERS
DELHI LUDHIANA

BL
1175
R19855

FOREWORD

Much has been written on the age-old institutions and practices like caste system and religious ritualism in India. They do not constitute overwhelming influence on the present generation specially the young educated ones anymore for the process of gradual modernization has spread awareness of their redundancy in the modern context. What is not commonly known is that the resistance to these is not an exclusively modern phenomenon. Savants and seers both in Ancient and Medieval India had raised their voice against artificial stratification of society and commanded large following in their times. If teachings of Gautama Buddha were a challenge to ascetic brahmanical order of ancient India, the Saints of the Bhakti movement like Guru Nanak, Kabir, Ramanuja and Ravidas spread the message of universal brotherhood in the medieval India.

These reformers came from all echelons of the society—from the proud brahmnical stock to the humbler sections.

Ravidas was born in a cobbler family and rose to sainthood. His followers came from all walks of life and from all the sections of the society. Shri Darshan Singh in this impressive monograph has dealt with the life of the saint, his teachings, the social milieu of his times, contemporary political scene, and finally his place in the social history of India. The author's task could not have been easy owing to the dearth of authentic documentary sources on the subject. This makes his work still more useful and commendable.

JAGJIVAN RAM

DELHI

PRINTED IN INDIA

PUBLISHED BY USHA RAJ KUMAR FOR KALYANI PUBLISHERS, LUDHIANA AND
PRINTED AT SAPHANA PRINTERS. K-16. NAVEEN SHAHDARA, DELHI-110032

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication
may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by
any means with permission from the Publishers.*

PREFATORY NOTE

I am pleased to see that Sardar Darshan Singh has brought out a monograph on Sant Ravidas and his times. He has, indeed, put in a good deal of labour and tapped different sources to make his work authentic and meaningful.

Today we all agree that the Bhagti movement in India was a movement of great socio-religious awakening. It started at a time when the country was facing political upheavals, religious persecution and social degeneration. The Bhagats played a great role in taking the country out of this rut and in bringing about a much desired socio-religious transformation. In spite of the fact that the Bhagats belonged to different places, different social strata, different cultural milieu, we find a great affinity in thought and values they preached. All of them hold dignity of labour very high. Bhagat Ravidas even equated labour with God, repudiated caste, emphasized equality of men, preached Love and rejected asceticism and celibacy as a way to God.

That way, Bhagat Ravidas was a typical representative of the Bhagti Movement. He came from one of the lowest castes, preached his doctrines fearlessly and rose to the pinnacles of spiritual glory in his times, He did much in breaking the prejudice of the contemporary society, and proved to be a source of enlightenment equally to the high and the low.

The ideals of Bhagti movement have a great relevance even today and it is heartening to see that scholars are turning to rediscover it through a study of life and works of its great propounders.

Sardar Darshan Singh's book on Bhagat Ravidas is a valuable step towards it.

Bishan Singh Samundri
Vice-Chancellor,
Guru Nanak Dev University

Amritsar

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It is strange that no historian of repute has ever tried to write on the life and teachings of Ravidas, a challenging yet an interesting subject. This humble attempt of mine is, in fact, a homage, I wish to pay to the great Sant on the occasion of his Sixth Birth Centenary celebrations. For this, I have tapped all the available sources, to enlighten my readers about the great saint of the Medieval India.

Ravidas's own hymns in the *Adi Granth*, are the main source of information about his teachings and philosophy, for their authenticity cannot be challenged. I have also studied *Sakhis* of this great Sant, compiled into a volume by Acharya Prithvi Singh Azad, *Raidas ji ki Bani*, published by Belvedier Press, Allahabad in 1908 and its subsequent editions, though apocryphal in nature, have been consulted. [I have, however, been meticulous in examining all the known sources and in consulting original authorities.

In the present monograph, I have studied the contemporary society, religion and politics, in the hope that it can acquaint us better with the life of the Great Sant. In the light of this knowledge, it becomes easier to understand Ravidas's response to the social, religious and political conditions of his times. It also helps in examining his attitude towards the existing forms of religious beliefs and practices. This approach to the subject, I believe, can be more fruitful in assessing the relevance of Sant Ravidas's message.

This attempt of mine shall be incomplete unless I place on record my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. S.S. Bal—a historian of eminence. He was kind enough to agree to my request for giving a thorough reading to the manuscript. It was, in fact, his blessings, and unerring, ever-available guidance which inspired me all along. I am equally grateful to Principal Harbhajan Singh who has been not only kind and considerate

but also munificat to ni2 and has always extended me every possible help.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the assistance that I received from Profs. Anup Singh, H.K. Sharma and Dr. Padam Gurcharan Singh, who took pains in searching and making available to me various useful books from their libraries. I also take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Prof. M.L. Mehta, my colleague in the Department of English, who read the manuscript very carefully and gave many useful suggestions, I am beholden to Prof. M.N. Garg, who very labouriously, prepared an elaborate index of the book.

I am grateful to Hon'ble Babu Jagjivan Ram, who conceded to my humble request, and spared some time from his busy schedule to go through the manuscript and write a Foreword for the book. I shall remain ever indebted to Sardar Bishan Singh Samundri, Vice-Chancellor, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar who snatched a few moments from his busy pursuits to go through the Manuscript and write the Prefatory Note.

My thanks are also due, to M/s Kalyani Publishers, Ludhiana and the printers for their promptness in bringing out the book.

Guru Nanak Dev University
Evening College,
Jullundur

DARSHAN SINGH

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter I</i>	<i>Pages</i>
The Life of Ravidas ...	1
<i>Chapter II</i>	
Contemporary Religion and Ravidas ...	10
<i>Chapter III</i>	
Contemporary Society and Ravidas ...	27
<i>Chapter IV</i>	
Contemporary Politics and Ravidas ...	39
<i>Chapter V</i>	
Sufism and Ravidas ...	46
<i>Chapter VI</i>	
Vaishnavism and Ravidas. ...	51
<i>Chapter VII</i>	
Place of Ravidas in History ...	60
Appendix I ...	67
Appendix II ...	68
Bibliography ...	70
Index ...	75

CHAPTER 1

THE LIFE OF RAVIDAS

RAVIDAS IS also known as Raidas. 'He is the second of the important sants'¹ of Bhakti movement, the first being Namdev. 'Little is known about Raidas's life and all that we can accept is contained in the occasional references which he makes in his works.'² The scholars hold diametrically divergent views about his date of birth and parentage. We have to examine the whole data in the light of available contemporary and modern sources.

Macauliffe believes that Ravidas was a disciple of Ramanand and a contemporary of Kabir. But he has expressed his inability to establish the correct date, parentage and place of birth.³ Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha gives first of *Har, Bikrmi Sambat* 1456 as the exact date of birth of Ravidas. He also believes that he was a contemporary of Kabir and a scion of Santokha and Diari,⁴ but he does not quote his source of information.

In a brief life sketch given in *Raidasji ki Bani* the exact date of birth of Ravidas is not mentioned. He is said to be a contemporary of Kabir living in the fourteenth century.⁵ His parents were Raghu *Chamar* and Dhurbinia. But it is also said

1. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford 1968, p. 154
2. *Ibid.*, 155
3. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*, Vol. VI, Oxford 1909, p. 316
4. (Bhai) Kahan Singh Nabha, *Mahan Kosh*, (2nd Ed.) 1971, p. 768
5. Ravidas : *Ravidasji ki bani*, Belveier Pr[^]ss, AU[^]habad 1971, (8th Ed.), p. 1

that Dhurbinia was a sister of Ravidas's father and Raghu, her husband.⁶

Gyani Barkat Singh Anand in *Janamsakhi* of Ravidas gives First of *Har Bikrmi Sambat* 1471 as Ravidas's date of birth. He has also given 28th of *Magh Bikrmi Sambat* 1575 as the latter's date of death. He too does not mention his source and simply says that he has consulted many *granth*s and found these dates to be correct. According to him Ravidas's father was Santokh Das and mother, Kaunsa Devi.⁷ Mahatma Ram Charan Kureel gives *Bikrmi Sambat* 1471 (*Magh Purnima, Ravivar*) as his date of birth.⁸

Prof. Raj Kumar Varma considers Ravidas to be a disciple of Ramanand and a contemporary of Kabir. Hence, he says, B.S. 1445-1575 be taken as Ravidas's period.⁹

Acharya Prithvi Singh Azad has given an altogether different date according to which Ravidas lived for 151 years (B.S. 1433-1584).¹⁰ Such an exceptionally long life is practically inconceivable. We have not come across even a single person with that much of age in the whole of medieval Indian History. The Acharya has based his study on a few *Sakhis*, which he says, were handed over to his father by his grandfather in A.D. 1904. He further claims that it was the first manuscript of these *Sakhis* which was prepared in B.S. 1757 (A.D. 1700) by Sant Karam Das, a brother of Dharam Das, who later on became *Bhai* Dharam Singh after he had obtained *pahul of Khanda* from Guru Gobind Singh in A.D. 1699. In 1946, the Acharya informs, he donated this manuscript to *Vedic Pustakalya*,

6. (Prof) Prakash Singh, *Bhagti Lehar, bhagat Ravidas ate unhan di bani*, an article contributed to *The Ravidas Number of Panjabi Duniya*, Panjab Language Department 1971, p. 6.

7. (Gyani) Barkat Singh Anand, *Janamsakhi Sri Ravidas Bhagat ji Amritsar* 1972 (4th Ed.), *Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh Book-sellers*, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, p. 15

8. (Mahatama) Ram Charan Kureel, *Bhagwan Ravidas ki Satya-Katha*, Kanpur *Vikrami Sambat* 1997, (*Vishesh Kathan*).

9. Raj Kumar Varma, *Hindi Sahitya ka Alochanatmak Itihas*, Paryag Vishvavidyalya (4th Ed.) p. 224

10. (Acharya) Prithvi Singh Azad, *Ravidas Darshan*, Sri Guru Ravjdaj Sansthan, Chandigarh 1973, p. 72

Gurudatt Bhawan, Lahore but during Hindu-Muslim riots of 1947 this Bhawan was reduced to ashes. The Acharya collected a few available *Sakhis* from his friends and disciples after the partition and compiled them in a book *Ravidas Darshan*.¹¹

In the light of above versions, it is very difficult to solve the mystery of dates. One thing common in the above mentioned accounts is, that all of them agree that Ravidas was a disciple of Ramanand and a contemporary of Kabir. But unfortunately we are not definite even about the exact dates of Ramanand or Kabir. Dr. Kala Singh Bedi gives Ramanand's time as A.D. 1400-1470 and Kabir's as A.D. 1398-1518¹². Dr. A.L. Srivastava has not given Ramanand's period. He gives Kabir's time as A.D. 1440-1510.¹³ Prof. Prakash Singh gives Ramanand's dates as B.S. 1423-1524 (A.D. 1366-1467).¹⁴

As many as 40 verses (one of these is a repetition) of Ravidas are included in the *Adi Granth*. These verses may be treated as an authentic source for the study of Ravidas. The *granth* was compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs. As is believed, he took more than five years (A.D. 1599-1604) to complete it, which means it came in less than hundred years after the death of sant Ravidas. It was for the first time that his hymns were cast in the form of an authentic *granth*. But it does not imply that he uttered only these forty verses.

The forty verses in the *Adi Granth* are a very valuable source of information for the historians to establish Ravidas's social, religious and political concerns. It is unfortunate that out of these verses, not a single one provides us any clue about his date of birth and parentage. For this matter, we have to depend upon the *later* sources.

Ravidas is supposed to be a disciple of *Vaishnava* teacher,

11. *Ibid.*, pp. a-x (*Apnibaat*).

12. Dr. Kala Singh Bedi, *Bhagat Ravidas da bhagti andolan vich sathan*, in an article in the *Guru Ravidas Number of Panjabi Duniya*, Panjab Language Department, 1971, p. 176

13. Dr. A-L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Agra 1964, p. 57

14. Prof. Prakash Singh, *Bhagti Lehar, Bhagat Ravidas ate unhan di Bani*, *Ravidas Number*, Panjabi Duniya 1971, p. 5

Ramanand; who was 'fifth in apostolic succession to Ramanuja'.¹⁵ But McLeod does not accept it. He writes:

'The tradition that he was a disciple of Ramanand must be rejected. The traditional link between Ramanand and Kabir is barely plausible on chronological grounds and it is evident that Ravidas was younger than Kabir. This is the conclusion which is indicated by the references which he makes to Kabir and it places him beyond the time of Ramanand.'¹⁶

It is generally believed that the verses of Ravidas in the *Adi Granth* do not provide any clue about Ravidas's teacher, which could have facilitated in establishing his time if not exact date of birth. If we care to examine his verses critically, we do find a definite hint about his Guru Parmananda in *Raga Asa* where Ravidas prays to him for *gur gyan* so that fears of a *bhagta* are allayed.¹⁷ In Ravidas's *Janamsakhi* Barkat Singh Anand has listed Parmananda among the twelve prominent disciples of Ramananda,¹⁸ although he accepts that Ravidas was also one of them. H.H. Wilson has also included Parmananda among the prominent twelves.¹⁹

Ravidas mentions the names of Namdev, Kabir, Trilochan, Sadna and Sena in one of his verses.²⁰ It is quite clear that all of them were senior to him in age, because he says that all of them got salvation irrespective of their castes. It is possible that Ravidas was a contemporary of all these *bhagtas* in their later days. Kabir is also said to have given a reference to Ravidas in one of his *slokas* when he says: '*Santan mein Ravidas Sant*'.

15. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 56

16. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 155

17. '*Ravidas das udas taj bhram tapan tap gur gyan Bhagat jan bhai haran Parmanand karhunidan.*'

Ravidas : *Raga Asa, Adi Granth*, p. 486, Standard pagination 1430.

18. Barkat Singh Anand, *Janamsakhi Sri Ravidas Bhagat ji*, p. 34

19. H.H. Wilson, *Religious sects of the Hindus*, Ed. Ernest Rost, Susil Gupta Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta 1958 (2nd Ed.), p. 28

20. *Namdev Kabir Trilochan Sadhna Sen tare*
Ravidas : *Raga Maru, Adi Granth*, p. 1106

We have hitherto observed that there are no two opinions about the presence of Ravidas during the period A.D. 1414-1515. If we accept Parmanand as the Guru of Ravidas, then First of *Har Sambat* 1471 (June-July, 1414) is a more probable date of his birth.

It is clear that Ravidas was a contemporary of Kabir during his last 34 years, and of Guru Nanak during his first 58 years. There is a mention of a conversation between Kabir and Ravidas. There is every possibility of such a dialogue, as both of them remained confined to Banaras for most of the time. Ravidas clearly mentions in *Raga Malar* that his family members carry away the cattle carcasses around Banaras.²¹ From these lines we gather three things:

- (i) that Ravidas's family was engaged in the profession of carrying away cattle carcasses;
- (ii) that they belonged to Dhed²² caste of Chamars;
- (iii) that they lived around Banaras.

Ravidas was born at Lehartara near Mandua Deeh in the west of present Varanasi.²³ In the absence of any documentary proof, we cannot ascertain the names of his parents. Some authors have ventured to prove that his father was a big businessman and not a *chamar*. They have further opined that Ravidas showed little interest in business of his father who had to separate him. Ravidas, in order to earn his livelihood, started mending shoes.²⁴ The suggestion is that Ravidas was a *chamar* not by birth but by profession. It is difficult to believe that the son of a businessman would take to a cobbler's work. There is little doubt that Ravidas was born in a low caste. We find several references to his low caste in his own

21. '*Jakaikutamb ke dhedh sabh dhor dhovant phirhai ajhu Banarasi aas paasa.*'

Ravidas : *Malar, Adi Granth*, p. 1293

22. '*Dhed appears to be a separate caste in the central provinces though closely allied with the chamar.*' Sir Denzil Ibbetson, *Panjab Castes*, Panjab Language Deptt., 1970, p. 267

23. (i) Parshu Ram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat ki sant prampra*, Allahabad B.S. 2020 p. 239

(ii) Acharya Prithvi Singh Azad, *Ravidas Darshan*, p. 64

24. J.S. Sethi, *Bhagat Ravidas, Sant Sipahi*, February, 1958.

verses.²⁵ Bhagat Dhanna who came after Ravidas also mentions about the low caste and profession of Ravidas.²⁶ All these references by Ravidas show his humility. McLeod also feels that there 'is a recurring note of humility and confession'²⁷ in his verses.

It is believed that Ravidas spent most of his time at Banaras (modern Varanasi). He adopted the profession of his forefathers. Briggles writes that he started worship of an earthen idol of 'Ram Janki' at a young age of twelve²⁸. But this does not seem to be correct because from Ravidas's verses we observe that he was a *Nirguna Bhagata*.²⁹ He worshipped the formless

- 25- (i) *Tio tio sail karhe jio bhave
Mahram mahal na ko atkavai
keh Ravidas khlas chamara
Jo ham sahri so meet hamara.
Ravidas, Raga Gauri 2, Adi Granth, p. 345*
- (ii) *Jaisa rang kasumbh ka taisa ih sansar
Mere ramaiye rang majith ka kahu Ravidas chamar.
Ibid., Gauri Bairagni I, Adi Granth, p. 346*
- (iii) *Jogisar paveh nahi toi gun kathan apar
Prem bhagti kai karne kahu Ravidas chamar.
Ibid., Gauri Purbi I, Adi Granth, p. 346*
- (iv) *Jati ocha pati ocha ocha janam hamara.
Ibid., Raga Asa 3, Adi Granth, p. 486*
- (v) *Merijat kamini pat kamini ocha janam hamara,
Turn Sarnagti Raja Ram Chand keh Ravidas chamara.
Ibid., Sorath 6, Adi Granth, p. 659*
- (vi) *Nagar jana meri jat bikhiat chamarang
Ridai Rain Gobind sarang.
Ibid., Malar I, Adi Granth, p. 1293*
- (vii) *Merijat kut bandhla dhor dhovanta nit hi Banarsiaaspaasa.
Ibid., Malar I, Adi Granth, p. 1293*
26. *Ravidas dhuventa dnor niti
Tinhni tiagi maya.
Dhanna : Asa 2, Adi Granth, p. 487*
27. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 155
28. G.W. Briggles, *The Chamars, Religious Life of India Series*, p. 208
29. *Nischal Nirakar aj anupam
Nirbhai gat Gobinda
Again agochar achhar atarak
Nirgun ant anand.
Ravidas : Raidas ji ki Bani, p. 24*

Brahma which was Absolute Reality. It may be that this was the result of a transformation at a later stage.

MIRAN BAI AND RAVIDAS

Miran Bai was the daughter of Rana Rattan Singh Rathor of Merta and a great-grand-daughter of Rao Jodhaji, the founder of Jodhpur. She was born at village Kudki in the Merta District in or about A.D. 1498.³⁰ In 1516 she was married to Bhoj Raj, the eldest son of Rana Sangram Singh (popularly known as Rana Sanga). But as ill luck would have it, Prince Bhoj Raj died three or four years after the marriage. Miran became widow at a very young age. A series of deaths in the family left her prostrate. She was broken-hearted and took to a life of devotion and ecstatic mysticism. In some of Miran's *padas* we find definite clues that she became a disciple of Ravidas.³¹

Many scholars feel that Miran was a believer of *Saguna Bhakti* and a devotee of Lord Krishna who was an incarnation of Vishnu. Hence, it was not possible for her to become a disciple of Ravidas, who believed in *Nirguna Bhakti*. In this regard it may be said: 'though the *Saguna bhakti* is generally devoted to the incarnation of Vishnu yet *Saguna Bhaktas* do not disagree with *Nirguna* form of God.³² The second possibility is that Miran had been a devotee of Lord Krishna before coming into contact with Ravidas. The possibility of a meet-

30. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 63

31. (i) *Gur milia Raidas ji dini gian ki gutki
Mira Bai kipadavli, Hindi Sahitya Samelan. Paryagporfa 24, p.10*

(ii) *Mero man lagio guru son
Ab na rahungi atki
Gur milia Raidas ji mahne
Dim gian ki gutki
Satguru sant milai Raidasa
Dini surat seh dani,
Ibid., pada 24, p. 10*

32. Darshan Singh, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, Lyall Book Depot, Ludiana 1968, p. 73

ing between Miran Bai and Ravidas cannot be ruled out. After the death of her father in March 1527, Miran's devotion and ecstatic mysticism brought her insurmountable misery and suffering. She left her home and started living the life of a recluse and during that period she is said to have visited Kashi and other holy places. It may be that during her visit to Kashi late in 1527 she became a disciple of Ravidas. Ravidas breathed his last in *Maghar* 1584 *Bikrmi Sambat* (Nov.-Dec. A.D. 1527).

JHALI RANI AND RAVIDAS

Priyadas who wrote an exegesis of *Bhakatmala* of Nabhadras has mentioned one Jhali Rani as a disciple of Ravidas.³³ After that all the *Janamsakhi* writers made her a legend. Wilson gives the following account regarding Jhali Rani and Ravidas:

'Amongst the disciples of Ravidas was Jhali, the Rani of Chitore : her adopting a chamar, as her spiritual preceptor excited a general commotion amongst the Brahmans of her state, and, alarmed for her personal safety, she wrote to Ravidas to request his counsel and aid. He repaired to her, and desired her to invite the Brahmans to a solemn feast. They accepted the invitation, and sat down to the meal provided for them when between every two Brahmans there appeared a Ravidas...from this his enemies and revilers became his disciples.'³⁴ 'Such is the legend of the *Bhaktamala* and whatever we may think of their veracity, their tenor, representing an individual of the most object class, an absolute outcaste in Hindu estimation, as a teacher and a saint, is not without interest.'³⁵

Some writers believe that Jhali Rani was wife of Rana Sangram

33. Parshu Ram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat ki Sant Prampra*, p. 242

34. H.H. Wilson, *Religious sects of the Hindus*, p. 67

35. *Loc. Cit.*

Singh.³⁸ If we accept this version, the date of Ravidas's death (A.D. 1527) would appear to be correct.

GURU NANAK AND RAVIDAS

At the time of Guru Nanak's birth, Ravidas was about 55 years old. Ravidas remained at Banaras almost the whole of his life. Guru Nanak who travelled far and wide, is said to have visited Banaras³⁷ and met Ravidas. Whether this meeting is genuine or not, it amply proves that Ravidas's fame had reached the Panjab, and his verses had become popular. Inclusion of his forty verses in the *Adi Granth* testifies the truth. Manohar Das Meharban Sodhi in *Pothi Sach Khand* refers to Ravidas, Mardana and Guru Nanak, and says that Mardana plays upon rebec and sings *padas* of Namdev, Kabir, Trilochan, Ravidas, Dhanna and Beni.³⁸ Again to quote this source : 'Guru Nanak alongwith his own *Bani* sings the *padas* of Namdev, Kabir, Trilochan, Ravidas, Dhanna and Beni.'³⁹ Whether Ravidas knew of Nanak is not known. It is, however, clear, that Guru Nanak was familiar with the name and fame of Ravidas.

36. Parshu Ram Chaturvedi, *Uttari Bharat Ki Sant Prampra*, p. 243

37. *Puratan Janamsakhi* or *Valaitwali Janamsakhi* (as it is popularly known) or Colebrooke's *Janamsakhi* describes Guru Nanak's visit and stay at Banaras.

Valaitwali Puratan Janamsakhi, Principal Bagsons College, Gujranwala, year not given, Sakhi 17, pp. 49-50

38. *Mardana rabab vajaida Nam Kabir Trilochan Ravidas Dhanna Beni ke pade gavta. Guru babe Nanak ke aage pade gavta.*

Manohar Das Meharban Sodhi, *Puratan Janamsakhi*, known as *Pothi Sachkhand*, Khalsa College Amritsar, p. 73

39. *Tab sri Name Kabir Ravidas ke pade babe ji ki bani*

Sen Beni ki bani lage gavane prem kar kar.

Ibid., p. 137

CHAPTER 2

CONTEMPORARY RELIGION AND RAVIDAS

BEFORE ENTERING into any discussion about the relevance of Ravidas's message, let us have a glance at the contemporary religions and 'a rich variety of religious belief and practice' to which the Muslim and Hindu societies were strongly wedded. It has been an age long tradition of Indian society that it 'allowed foreigners to settle down in this country and to permit them to follow their respective avocations without any hindrance.'¹ All the early invaders—Greeks, Scythians, Parthians and Huns became assimilated to the Indian social structure. But advent of Islam 'was a challenge at the outset to the process of synthesis and fusion.'² It is very strange that neither the various governments functioning in the northern regions of India nor the inhabitants of these areas showed any signs of departure from their receptive behaviour even after the bloody on slaughts of Mahmud of Ghazna in the beginning of eleventh century A.D. In fact, 'simple, clearcut, and aggressive Islam had nothing in common with the elaborate, ritualistic and absorptive Hinduism.'³

In order to have a clear-cut picture of Islam—the religion of the ruling class, we should determine as to what was the nature of the then society (1206-1526). A considerable majority of

1. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, 1969, p. 62
2. B.P. Mazumdar, *The Socio-economic History of Northern India*, K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1960 p. 125
3. (Dr.) P.N. Chopra in *Studies in the Cultural history of India*, (Ed.) Guy S. Metaroux & Francois Crouzet, 1965 Agra, p. 281
4. B.P. Mazumdar, *The Socio-economic History of Northern India*, p. 125

modern historians⁴ has called the state a theocracy. *The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* defines theocracy as 'that constitution of a state in which the Almighty is regarded as the sole sovereign, and the laws of the realm as divine commands rather than the human ordinances—the priesthood necessarily becoming the officers of the invisible ruler.'⁵ *The Oxford Dictionary* defines theocracy as a state governed by God, directly or through a sacerdotal class.'⁶ Three elements appear to be essential in a theocracy: (i) presence of a sacerdotal class of priesthood, (ii) prevalence of the law of God, and (iii) the sovereign or ruler who promulgates this law.'⁷ All these three ingredients were present in the Turkish State. However, Prof. Muhammad Habib feels that the Muslim state in India 'was not theocratic...and its foundation was, nevertheless, non-religious and secular.'⁸ We may now examine the nature of the state in the light of these two conflicting statements.

We observe that the first ingredient—presence of a sacerdotal class of priesthood—was very much present in the Turkish State. 'The jurists were invariably theologians.'⁹ The *ulema* played a very significant role in determining the state policy. They 'became a political voice which could not be disregarded.'¹⁰ Barring two or three cases, all the Sultans held the *ulema* in high esteem. Even those sultans who had little respect for this class, consulted them while formulating any policy regarding the Hindus. Even 'education in those days was subsidised and

5. (Dr.) T.P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, London, 1885 711; and also see A.L. Srivastva, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Agra 1964, p. 1, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Luzac & Co. London, 1933-34, Vol. I, p. 959; Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurengzib*, Vol. III, p. 296; and Dr. R.P. Tripathi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad 1936, P.2
6. *The Chambers' Twentieth Century Dictionary*, 1950 Edition, p. 1005
7. *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1955 Edition, p. 1271
8. K.S. Lai in a Seminar on *Nature of Medieval Indian State*, Proceedings of a Seminar, Panjab University, Department of History, 1966, p. 39
9. Prof. Muhammed Habib, in introduction to *Fatwa-i-Jahsndari*, p. vi
10. K.S. Lai, Seminar on *Nature of Medieval Indian State*, p. 39
11. Romila Thapar, *A History of India*, Vol. I (Reprint) Penguin Books 1972, p. 290

controlled by the state and the latter, being a theocracy, patronised only Islamic institutions.¹² 'Education was so much dominated by theological consideration that secular subject, upon which depended the economic, social and political well-being of the people, were practically ignored.'¹³ 'Theology being the mode of thought of medieval times, politics, philosophy and education were brought under its control and adjusted to a technical theological terminology. Men thought theologically and expressed themselves theologically.'¹⁴

The teachers in the *maqtabs* and *madrasahs* were either the priests or those who were well-versed in theology.

About the second point—prevalence of the law of God—we may say that the state in medieval India, was run according to the *Shara* 'which was not based on human experience but on divine revelation. It was not a secular law.'¹⁵ Religious law is generally opposed to secular law. The main cause of the sufferings of the non-Muslims in general and the Hindus in particular, was the imposition of religious law. They were called *zimmi* and were required to pay *Jaziah*, which was a sort of inferiority badge on our people. In fact, 'the Hindus were relegated to the position of inferior people who were not permitted to observe their religious rites openly and publicly, to carry on legitimate religious propaganda, to build new temples or repair the old ones. Many disabilities were imposed upon them in matter of enjoyment of civic rights and state employment.'¹⁶

When Alauddin Khalji consulted the famous *qazi* Maghisuddin of Bayana about the position which the Hindus should be allowed to enjoy in his kingdom, the *qazi* replied, 'The Hindus are designated in the law as payers of tribute (*kharaj*

12. Darshan Singh, *The Ninth Nanak—A Historical Biography*, K. Lai & Co. Jullundur 1975, p. 13

13. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 97

14. Yusuf Hussain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1957, p. 69

15. K.S. Lai, *Seminar on Nature of Medieval Indian State*, p. 40

16. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 5

guzar); and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should, without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the officer throws dirt into their mouths, they must without reluctance open their mouths wide to receive it. By these acts of degradation are shown the extreme obedience of the *Zimmi*, the glorification of the true faith. God Himself orders them to be humiliated.—the Prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them and to make them captive—, no other authority except the great *Imam* (Abu Hanifah), whose faith we follow, has sanctioned the imposition of the *Jaziah* on the Hindus.'¹⁷ Alauddin agreed with the *qazi*. He was happy that he had been following the above policy in regard to the overwhelmingly vast Hindu population in his dominions.¹⁸

If we, now, come to the third point—the sovereign who promulgates the Law of God—we observe that most of the rulers of medieval India were uneducated; they lived luxuriously, maintained huge seraglios and did not know much of the Islamic law. But they were compelled to enforce it for the sake of the smooth sailing of their reign. The *ulema* and the haughty Turkish nobility not only wanted the ruler to observe the norms of religion but also to impose them on their subjects. The ruler was safe only if he enforced the *shara*'. Even those rulers who did not belong to pure Turkish or Mughul races, laboured hard to prove that they were good Muslims who enforced the Quranic Law more vigorously. For example, Firoz Tughlaq and Jehangir who were born of Hindu mothers, became more rigid in their religious policies.

Thus, we see that the medieval Indian State was a theocracy and the non-Muslims were hard pressed. Socially, economically and religiously, the latter were cornered by the Muslim rulers.

Unlike Hinduism, Islam is a rigid and uncompromising religion. The Quranic injunction is '...And when the sacred months (*Ramzari*) were passed, kill those who join other deities

17. Ziauddin Barani. *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, cf. A.L. Srivastava, *The Sultanate of Delhi*, Shiva Lai Aggarwala & Co.; Agra, 1964 (4th Revised Edition), p. 153

18. *hoc. Cit.*

with God, wherever ye shall find them...but if they shall convert...then let them go their way.¹⁹ In Islam there is only one way—the way revealed by the Prophet through the *Quran*. All other ways are *kufir* (untrue). Islam agrees on monotheism i.e., one universal God who is the creator of the whole universe. According to this belief God gives man the choice either to follow the right or the wrong course. God is preserving a very careful record of the actions of man in his court. After death, man rests in the grave. On the day of judgment (*mahshar*) he will rise and present himself before *Allah*, who would allot him a seat in hell (*dozakh*) or heaven (*Bahisht*) as per his worldly actions.

As far as outer ceremonies are concerned, there should be no difference among the Muslims. All should perform *Roza*, *Namaz*, *Zakat*, *Haj* and *Hadis* according to the *Shard'*. Besides, there are outward manifestations also. A Musalman was to build his mosque in a particular way or fashion. The entrance should be towards the West. A collective prayer (*namaz*) is to be performed on Fridays. Every Musalman has to recite fixed lines while bending his knees. There are some *fiqh* laws. There are also laws regarding divorce, maintenance and conversion etc.

Thus, we see that Islam is a completely different way of life. It does not believe in religious toleration. 'The highest duty of a Muslim ruler is to carry on *jihad* by waging war against infidel lands (*dar-ul-harb*) till they became a part of the realm of Islam (*dar-ul-Islam*) and their populations are converted into true believers.²⁰

On the other hand, Hinduism is not any one religious belief. It is just a collective cultural consciousness of the people, living between the Himalayas and the Southern Seas. All the *tirthas* sacred to the Hindus, are situated in this so-called sacred land. Everyone living in this land takes delight in the folktales of *Ramayana* and *Mahabhart*. But so far as religious belief is concerned, there is no one system. There are people, even today, who believe in the *Vedas*. There are

19. *Quran*, IX, 5-6. George Sale (tr.), p. 179

20. Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. III, (Third Ed.), p. 249

those who believe in caste system and there are those who denounce it. A *sanatani* who believes in idolatory is a Hindu and an *Arya-samajist* who condemns it is also a Hindu.

In Indian religions, Jainism is 'one of the oldest Indian religions.' But it could never pose a serious threat to Hinduism. Then came Buddhism. 'Theoretically, Buddhism was a formidable rival to Hinduism, but in the ritual of worship and in practice it had compromised with the brahmnical religion to such an extent that it could almost have been regarded as a sect of the latter. Jainism remained unchanged and continued to be supported by the merchant communities of Western India.'²¹

The intellectual class took keen interest in philosophical debates which resulted from the rivalry of Hinduism and Buddhism. In due course, there flourished six schools of thought that later came to be known as the six systems of Hindu philosophy. The Six systems were: *Nyaya* (Analysis) school was based on logic. The Buddhist teachers and preachers were well-versed in this art. Logic was taught at the Universities of Nalanda, Udandpura and Vikramsila etc. in the hey-days of Buddhism. *Vaisheshika* (particular characteristics) was a sort of atomic philosophy. According to this philosophy the universe was sum total of a number of atoms, distinct from the soul. Therefore, there were two universes—matter and soul. *Sankhya* (enumeration) recognised the dualism between matter and soul and explained creation in atheistic terms. The philosophers of this school held that three qualities of virtue, passion and dullness, correctly balanced, constituted normality. *Yoga* (application) concentrated on the control of the body and maintained that a perfect control over the body led to the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality. *Mimansa* (inquiry) school was established by orthodox Brahmans and was the outcome of their inquisitorial nature. The Brahmans felt that the *vedas* were being neglected and posed a challenge to the post-m/a thought. *Vedanta* (end of the *vedas*) claimed origin in the *Vedas* and believed in the union of the individual and the

21. Romila Thapar, *History of India*, I, p. 159

Absolute Soul after physical death. It was purely metaphysical in character and later on 'came to the fore, to the detriment of the other philosophies.'²² The knowledge of the *Vedas* interested all those who came to this country.

Death is the ultimate end of human life. According to the ancient Hindu belief, salvation (*mokshd*) from the bondage of birth and death can be attained by three means (*marga*) viz., *Gyan marga* (knowledge), *Karma marga* (action) and *bhakti marga* (devotion). During the period, many Hindu saints and reformers resorted to the *Bhakti marga* for salvation. These saints preached against the rigours of caste, and condemned the hollowness of certain rituals, which had made the Hindu society very complex. The advent of Islam in India was not welcomed by the ritualistic and caste-ridden Hindu society. The two cultures could have produced fusion and synthesis but instead of becoming 'herodian' i.e. fluid, elastic and receptive, they became 'zealot' i.e. stiff, rigid and orthodox. The saints of *bhakti* cult attempted at conciliating Hinduism and Islam and succeeded in it to some extent.

The *bhakti* movement is supposed to have originated from the great Hindu reformer Shankracharya who 'successfully combated Buddhism and gave Hinduism a solid philosophical background. He established a logical monistic system,²³ and laid emphasis on *Gyan marga* for attainment of salvation. But this system 'being highly philosophical and intellectual failed to evoke a hearty response from the common people.'²⁴ Secondly, this system lost its validity after the 10th century A.D. with the advent of intolerant Islam in India. It became very difficult to inseminate the Vedic knowledge. In the 12th Century A.D. Ramanuj laid stress on *Bhakti marga* for attaining the divine bliss. He believed in the cult of self-surrender (*prapatti*) and argued that God was the Supreme Reality and was the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe. 'In the Sant tradition one cannot but fail to notice a strong cur-

22. *Ibid.*, p. 162

23. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 54

24. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, Munshi Ram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi, 2nd Revised Edition, 1975, p. 37

rent of intense devotional love for and a spirit of surrender to the object of love who is no other than the Ultimate and Absolute."²⁵ This was philosophy of *vishistadvaita* which was, perhaps, the result of *vaishnava Bhakti* movement. It was for the first time that the *sudras* and the outcastes were permitted by Ramanuja to visit certain temples on certain fixed days of the year.

Ramanuja's philosophy of *vishistadvaita* was carried much further by his famous disciple Ramananda, 'who was fifth in apostolic succession to Ramanuja.'²⁶ 'The cult of Rama as incarnation of Vishnu was popularized by Ramananda'.²⁷ He allowed the *sudras* and the women to become his disciples, 'irrespective of their caste affiliations.'²⁸ Now, the doors of *vaishnavism* were open to all without any distinction of birth or creed or sex. This afforded an opportunity to Ravidas to become a disciple of Parmananda who himself was a disciple of famous Ramananda. Ravidas composed verses in Hindi, it gave the masses a direct access to his teachings. The *sudras* were particularly benefitted because Ravidas's teachings had brought considerable awakening among them. We do not know much about Parmananda but about Ramananda we know that he 'made no great break from the past and made no attempt to establish complete social equality,²⁹ whereas Ravidas preached against the caste system and strongly condemned the four *varnas*. 'The fact remains that during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries much of the socio-religious life of Northern India including that of Panjab, was surcharged with the spirit and ideas of the non-Brahmnical protestant and non-Conformist cults and sects like those of the *Kapalikas*, *Avadhutas*, *Aghorapanthis* and *Nathapanthis*, perhaps also of the *Sehajyani* Buddhists.'³⁰

'Ravidas's rejection of traditional Hinduism was categori-

25. *Loc at.* p. 37.

26. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 56

27. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 124

28. H.H. Wilson, *Religious sects of the Hindus*, Calcutta 1958, p. 115

29. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 57

30. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, p. 34

cal.³¹ He says 'I cannot perform thine adoration and worship according to Hindu rites.'³² He vehemently condemned idolatry. He did not even approve of *Arati* (waving of lights before the images) because it amounted to idol-worship. He felt that uttering His Name was the right path and people had forgotten His Name. He was particularly harsh on those who took delight in listening to the legends of eighteen *Puranas*.³³ He denounced offering-rituals of worship,³⁴ religious ceremonies and pilgrimage etc.,³⁵ whereas, Ramananda laid stress on love and devotion but did not emphasize on these points.³⁶ Ravidas preached inward spirituality and believed in one formless God who was omnipresent.³⁷ To the saints of *Bhakti* movement

31. A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and His Times*, Panjabi University, Patiala 1971, p. 53
32. Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion : Its Gurus, Sacred, Writings and Authors*, Vol. VI. Oxford 1909, pp. 110-19
33. Ravidas : *Raga Dhanasri, Adi Granth*, p. 694
34. 'Dudh ta bachhre thanhu bitario
Phul bhavrai jal meen bigario
Mai gobindpuja kaha lai charavu
avar na phul anup na pavau
mailagar berhai hai bh aianga
bikh amrit baseh ik sa nga
dhup dip naivedeh basa
kaise puj karhai teri dasa'
Ravidas : *Raga Gujri 3, Adi Granth*, p. 525 (standard pagination 1430) also see *Raidas ji ki bani*, Balvadiar Printing Works, Allahabad 1971, (8th Edition) p. 17 (The theme is the same as in the *Adi Granth*. The style is more or less the same but text differs). Hereinafter it is quoted as *Raidas ji ki bani*.
35. 'Tirath barat na karau andesa
tumre charan kamal ka bharosa'
Raidas ji ki bani, p. 23; also see *Adi Granth*, p. 875
36. *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 57
37. (i) 'Ravidas hamaro Ramji Dasrath kar sut nahin
Ram hamo mahin ram rahio bisab kutambh mahin.'
Prithvi Singh Azad, *Ravidas Darshan*, Sri Guru Ravidas Sansthan, Chandigarh 1973, Part II (Collection of *Bani*) pp 1-2. Hereinafter the word 'Sakhi' appears for the verses collected by Prithvi Singh Azad in his book *Ravidas Darshan*.
- (ii) 'Ravidas hamaro Ram to sakal rahio bharpur
Rom rom mehin ram rehio Ram masuk na dur.'
Sakhi 2, p. 2

'God is infinite and so ultimately beyond apprehension, but this doesn't necessarily mean that He is wholly unknowable, that He is totally beyond the range of human perception. For Guru Nanak, as for Namdev, Kabir, Raidas and other sants, there is certainly a revelation of God, partial no doubt, but commensurate with the understanding and experience of man and accordingly sufficient for his salvation.'³⁸

We see that Ravidas does not believe in the theory of incarnation. *The saguna bhakti* is generally devoted to the incarnation of *Vishnu* and though *saguna Bhaktas* don't disagree with *Nirguna* form of God, yet they worship the *saguna* form as His representation.³⁹ The use of words like 'Raja Ram Chanda', Ram, Hari, Madho, Gobind, Krishna etc.⁴⁰ has led many to think that Ravidas believed in *avtarvad*. After a candid scrutiny of his verses, we reach the conclusion that he has used these expressions for God who alone is the Absolute Reality.

38. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and Sikh Religion*, Oxford Press; 1958, pp. 173-74
39. Darshan Singh, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, Lyall Book Depot, Ludhiana, 1968, p. 73
40. (i) 'Madho kia kahiye bhram aisa
jaisa maniya hoi na taisa.'
Ravidas: *Sorath I, Adi Granth*, p. 657
- (ii) 'Madhva janat hau jaisi taisi
ab kaha karhaage aisi '
Ibid; Sorath II, p. 658
- (iii) *Bin hari bhagti kahau kih lekhe
na bichario raja Ram ko jas.*
Ibid, Sorath III, p. 658
- (iv) *Har Har Har na japhi rasna
avar sabh tiag bachan rachna.*
Ibid, Sorath IV, p. 658
- (v) *Har har har har har har hare
Har simrat jan gaye nis tar tare.'*
Ibid. Asa I, p. 487
- (vi) 'Nam tero aarti majan murare
Har ke nam bi'' jhuthi sagal pasare.'
Dhanasri III, p. 694
- (vii) *Nagar jana meri jat bikhiai chamarang
Ride Ram Gobind gun sarang.'*
Malar, p. 1293

He was neither a *Ratnaite* nor a *Krishnaite*, because a worshipper of one *avatar* cannot be the worshipper of another *avatar*. Ravidas believed in the unity of God. He contemplated upon the formless Brahman.⁴¹ His is *Sehaj Bhakti*.⁴²

In many *Janamsakhis*, Ravidas has been described as an idolator and is said to have worshipped the idol of *saligram*, wore the sacred thread (*yagyopaveet*) and pasted his forehead with *chandan* like Brahamans. The legend goes that the Brahamans objected to it because he was a low-born and had no right to these brahmanical signs. This *sakhi* about Ravidas does not seem to be correct. Even if it is true, it does not prove that he believed in *karmakand* or *vedante*. He might have used these marks as a means to make people understand the futility of the rituals and religious ceremonies. There is also a reference to it that when Ravidas's object was achieved, he threw away the idol of *saligram* into the Ganga along with bell, conch and other paraphernalia of worship.⁴³ This *Sakhi* seems to suggest that Ravidas believed in the maxim 'ends justify means'.⁴⁴

Ravidas had fairly good knowledge of the Hindu mythology

41. (i) *Nishchal nirakar aj anupam nirbhae gat Gobinda*
Agam agochar achhar atarak nirgun ant ananda.
Raidas ji ki bani, p. 24
- (ii) "*Niranjan nirakar nirlep i nirbikas nisasi.*"
Ibid, p. 6
42. *Mam banjaro Ram ko sahaj karo biopar*
main Ram nam dhan ladia bikh ladi sansar
Ravidas: Raga Garri Bairagni, Adi Granth, p. 346
 These lines with a slight difference also appear in *Rag Kedara Adi Granth Raidas ji ki bani, p. 34*
43. Gyani Pratap Singh, *Sakhi Brahm Gyani Bhagat Ravidas*, Amritsar 1968, Gyani Narain Singh, *Sri Bhagat Ravidas ji (Janamsakhi)* Amritsar, pp. 37-42; *Janam Sakhi Sri Ravidas Bhagat ji*. Gyani Barkat Singh Anand, Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh Booksellers, Amritsar, Year not given, pp. 148-49
44. *Fal karan fuli banrai*
fal laga tab ful bilai
**jiane karan karam abhias*
gian bhaia tah karmhau nas.
Ravidas : Rag Bhairo 2, The Adi Granth p. 1167

and philosophy. He referred to the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Sastras*, the *smritis* and hinted at *Ajamal*, *Ganka*, *Sursaru*, *Kamdhenu*, *Naumidhi*, *athara sidhis* and *shat Karma*.⁴⁵ In Raga Dhanasri there is a reference to *char khani* (four sources of the creation of the Universe.)⁴⁶ He also manifested his knowledge of Islamic culture, and frequently used *Rahim*, *Rehman*, *Karim*, *Allah*, *Ulla*, *Azan*, *Khaliq*, *Qadar* and *Pursalat* (*Pulsirat*). He has shown comprehensive knowledge of contemporary Hindu and Muslim beliefs and practices. His knowledge of geography is upto date and observation very keen.⁴⁷

In India we come across the traditional four-fold division of time into the *Krta*, *Treta*, *Dwapar* and *Kali* Ages. According to Hindu belief, in the first, virtue reigns supreme, in the second it declines; in the third, it becomes sparse, and in the fourth, it disappears. Sant Ravidas did not agree with this scheme of periodization.⁴⁸ He pointed out the confusion created by the *Vedas* and the *Puranas* because these led one to think as to what was to be done and what not.⁴⁹ He denounced *brat* (fasts), *tirath ishnan* (Holy dip) and pilgrimage because they only wash the dirt of body, not the soul. Inward spirituality could be attained by listening to the Word.⁵⁰

45. The six duties of a Brahman have been explained in the Manusmriti as follows:
 "rszrrTro sq-qTf JIspf jrr^R att ?T?T sfer s^rt^r, <rc i"
Manusmriti, 10. 75.
46. *Raga Kedara, Adi Granth, 1124*
 The four sources of the creation of the universe are:
Andaj, Jeraj, Setaj and Utbhuj. This reference is also found in the *Gurbani: 'Andaj jeraj setaj kini utbhuj khan bahu rach dini,' (Chaupai).*
47. *Bias mah lekhiye sanak meh pekhiye nam ki kamna saptadipa.*
Ravidas: Malar, Adi Granth, p. 1293
48. *Ibid., Gauri Bairagni, Adi Granth, p. 346*
49. *Nana khianpuran bed bidh chautis achhar main*
bias bichar kario parmarth ram nam sar nahi
Ibid. Raga Sorath, Adi Granth, p. 658, and also see Raga Maru, Adi Granth, p. 1106
50. *Tirath barat na karo andesha*
tumhe charan kamal ka bharosa.
Ravidas ji ki Bani, p. 23

"The sant tradition as brought down and made known by sants like Namdev, Kabir and Ravidas.-rejected altogether the practice of celibacy and asceticism, of penances and austerities, of pilgrimages and formal religious exercises, worship of images and the authority of the so-called sacred texts.'⁵¹ Like Guru Nanak, Ravidas repeatedly declared that there was no use of pilgrimage if the heart was not cleansed of pride. The object of pilgrimage was not without but within oneself. One needed only to search it within one's heart and not at *Kailash* or *K'aba*.⁵² And 'with the idea of the temple being within oneself, comes the repudiation of idol-worship.'⁵³

Sant Ravidas, again like Guru Nanak, denounced the *pandit* too.⁵⁴ In many of his compositions he has asked him many questions. All references to religious ceremonies, rituals and pilgrimage are invariably a dig at the *pandit*. Not only the Hindu priests, but the *Mulla* (Muslim priest) also had to suffer his wrath.⁵⁵

Ravidas believed that the only thing which could bring solace to the disturbed mind, was His Name. God's Name alone was true and it was the only source which could enlighten the human body.⁵⁶

Like the Sikh Gurus, Ravidas has nowhere shown any appreciation of deep meditation (*ghor tap*) for attainment of *moksha* (salvation).⁵⁷ He was of the firm opinion that even a person doing manual labour could recite His Name. Hands

51. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh society*, pp. 37-8.

52. *Sakhi* 16, p. 17

53. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 208

54. 'Thotha *pandit* thothi *bani*
thothi *Har bin sabai kahani*.
Raidas ji ki bani, p. 24

55. *Sakhi* 76, p. 74

56. *Jo lo ghat mein pran hai to lau japau satnam*
Ravidas param padpaihein jinh ghat basio Ram.
Prithvi Singh Azad, *Guru Ravidas*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1975, p. 78

57. *Kaha laio nachai ar gai*
kaha bhaio tap kinluun.
Ibid., p. 86

and tongue would work simultaneously.⁵⁸ Macauliffe's charge that Ravidas was so lost in the worship of *saligram* that he ceased to take interest in his profession and ultimately gave it up and lived from hand to mouth, is absolutely baseless. In many of his *Janamsakhis* it is recorded that Ravidas used to spend all his earnings on saints and *sadhus*. It brought about a rupture between the father and the son. We need not rely on these statements because we have sufficient evidence from Ravidas's verses that he believed in dignity of labour.⁵⁹ Sant Ravidas himself was an ideal example for his followers. While mending broken shoes he uttered His Name. He believed in hard labour and equated it with God.⁶⁰

In Ravidas's verses, we see no place for *Bairag*.⁶¹ He also does not favour the way shown by the *Jogis* and considers *Jog* as useless.⁶² He is of the firm conviction that a person who wants to concentrate on Him should not stick to useless practices and beliefs. Those who resorted to supernatural powers (*ridhi sidhis*) vainly pursued Him. In fact, one can see Him by giving up this path,⁶³ and by subduing one's passions. Shaving of hair (*inund*) and telling of rosary are useless and cannot lead one to salvation.⁶⁴ One can attain salvation by

58. *Jibha bhajai har nam nit hath karhin nit kam*
Ravidas bhae nihchint ham mam chint karainge Ram.
Ibid., p. 80

59. *Ravidas sram kar khahian jo ko par basai*
Nek kamajau kar, kabhun na nihfal jai
Loc. Cit.

60. *Sram ko isarjan kajau pujai din rain*
Ravidas tinhai sansar mahin sada milai sukh chain.
Loc. Cit.

61. *Bhagat na nidra sadhein bhagat na bairag bandhein*
Raidasji ki bani, p. 12

62. *Bhagat na indri bandhein*
bhagat na jog sadhein.

Raidas ji ki bani, *Loc. Cit.* also see *Guru Ravidas*, p. 87

63. *Ram initio apni gun kwiwo*
ridhi sidhi sabai jo ganvai.
Loc. Cit. Guru Ravidas, p. 87

64. *Bhagat na mund mundai*
bhagat na mala dikhai.
Loc. Cit.

casting away 'self'.⁶⁵ Giving up food and water, boasting of knowledge and meditating in desolate caves in the forests far from constituting *bhakti*⁶⁶ imply hypocrisy. He condemns all hypocrisy as sham.⁶⁷

The medieval saints of *Bhakti* cult attached great importance to the Guru 'who might be a human teacher or who might be understood not as a person but as the inner voice of God.'⁶⁸ 'The Guru occupies a unique and most dignified position in the *Bhakti* cult. The reliance of the devotee on the Guru is immense. He kindles the spiritual fire, shows the path and leads to the goal. He is the most potent factor in uniting the devotee with the Lord.'⁶⁹ Ravidas also believed in the concept of the Guru. For him the Guru is like *parasmani*,⁷⁰ But it is very difficult to find out the perfect Guru. It is possible only through the benevolence of God.⁷¹ And it is the Guru through whose grace one can worship Him. Guru Nanak laid stress on the

65. *Apo gayo tab bhagti pai
aisi bhagti hai bhai.*

Loc. Cit. Guru Ravidas, p. 87

66. *Bhagat na ras dan
bhagat na kathai gyan
bhagat na ban main gufa khudai*

*bhagat na ahar ghatai
ei sab karam kahai.*

Lcc. Cit. Guru Ravidas, p. 87

67. *Ram nam bin jo kachu kariye
so sab bharam kahayi.*

Loc. Cit. Guru Ravidas, p. 87

68. W.H.McLeod, *Guru Nanak and Sikh Religion*, p. 153

69. (Dr.) Raj Kumar, *Origin and development of the Bhakti concept from ancient time upto Guru Nanak*, Panjab History Conference proceedings, 1969, p. 66

70. *Param paras guru bhetye
purab iikhat lilat*

*unman man man hi mile,
chhutkat bajar kapat.*

Ravidas : *Raga Gauri Bairagni, Adi Granth*, p. 346

71. 'Gur par sad niranjan pavau'

Ravidas : *Raga Gujri, Adi Granth*, p. 525

need of a Guru, which he expressed in the *mul mantra*.⁷² There are some verses in Ravidas's hymns in which the Guru is exalted to one who provides shelter to everyone.⁷³

We observe that Ravidas has repeatedly emphasized the importance of the Name. He believes that the Name is God's revelation through which man can know Him. But *haumai* (ego or pride) is the main hurdle between man and the Name. Unless *haumai* is eradicated, the mind cannot concentrate on Him. Man should be free from all worldly worries to recite His name.⁷⁴ Ravidas feels that either *haumai* or the Name can reside in man's heart. When there was *haumai* the Name was missing and now when *haumai* has vanished, the Name has crept in.⁷⁵ The only way to get rid of *haumai* is to repeat His Name.⁷⁶

We reach the conclusion that Ravidas discards Hindu and Muslim scriptures. He denounces idol-worship, pilgrimage and fasts. He does not have any sympathy for the Hindu or Muslim priestly class because they deal in falsehood. He

72. **There is one God,**

His name is Truth.

He is the Creator,

He is without fear and without hate,

He is beyond time Immortal,

His Spirit pervades the Universe.

He is not born,

Nor does he die to be born again,

He is self-existent.

By the Guru's grace thou shalt worship Him.

Guru Nanak, *Mulmantra*, (tr.) Khushwant Singh, *Hymns of Guru Nanak*, p. 43

73. *Ravidas manush janam mahin haun chitaun guru ek
ad ant mero satguru rakhe saban ki tek.*

Sakhi 42, p. 44

74. *Jin jeo dia su rijak ambrave
sab ghat bhitar haat chalave
kar bandgi chhad main mera
hirdai nam smar savera.*

Ravidas : *Raga Suhi, Adi Granth*, p. 794

75. *Jab ham hotai tab hi nahi ab tuhi main nahi.*

Ravidas : *Raga Sorath, Adi Granth*, p. 657

76. *Loc. Cit. Sorath, Adi Granth*, p. 657

himself does not believe in *karmkand*.¹¹ He has nowhere identified himself with any sect. He has referred to *Vishnu*, *Brahma* and *Shiva* as symbols of God. His greatest emphasis is on the Name.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY AND R/VVIDAS

MUSLIM SOCIETY

THE MEDIEVAL Indian society comprised mainly of two great religions—Islam and Hinduism. When Islam reached the heart of India about six hundred years after the establishment of the Arab colony in Sind in A.D. 712 it was a changed religion. The most important ingredient of Islam—concept of brotherhood was missing from it and it had become 'class-bound and feudal in outlook.' During the Sultanat period (A.D. 1206-1526), the Turks and the Afghans ruled over India. The Turks were 'the leaders of Muslim people' not only in Central Asia but in India also. They believed in the superiority of blood. Balban (A.D. 1265-1287) claimed descent from mythical Turkish hero Afrasiyab. He had faith in the superiority of 'blue blood' and did not like to associate the non-Turks with his administration.

Towards the end of 13th century countless Muslims migrated to India from the Central Asian countries. The process was accelerated by the military exploits of Changiz Khan's successors. Many families of repute were compelled to take shelter in India. It led to the mixing up of the Muslims of different races and nationalities.¹² After the death of Balban in 1287 the caste rigidity softened to some extent, intercaste marriages started taking place. Sultan Jalaluddin Khalji gave his daughter in marriage to a defeated Mongol Chief

1. (Dr.) P.N. Chopra, *The impact of Islam on India, in Studies in the Cultural History of India*, Edited Guy S. Metraux, Paris, P. Crouzet, Agra 1965, p. 281
2. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Agra 1964, p. 25

¹¹ 'Sacha sumrin nambisasa man bach kahe Raidasa'
Raidas ji ki bani, p. 25

SANT RAVIDAS AND HIS TIMES

Ulugh, who was allowed to settle in Delhi after he had embraced Islam. Many Mongol settlers called New Muslim were given important military assignments. Even most of the Hindu converts to Islam were given opportunity to hold important positions. 'The idea of the brotherhood of Islam and equality of its adherents had a powerful appeal for the low castes among the Hindus.'³ They voluntarily offered themselves for conversion to Islam. But the number of such people was very small and that too, in the cities. The people in the countryside remained, by and large, unaffected. The *sufi* saints played a very important role in the process of peaceful conversion of the Hindus to Islam.⁴ Thus 'the purity of blood of which the Turk was arrogantly proud gave place to a heterogeneous race.'⁵

Although the Muslims were in an alien land where they were being resisted stoutly by the Hindus, they did not sink their own religious differences. The rivalry between the *Sunnis* and the Persian *Shias* manifested itself throughout the medieval age. The *Sunnis* being a big majority always dominated the *Shias*—their co-religionists. The *Ismailis*, the *Carmathians* and *Mulhids* were openly condemned by the fanatic *Sunnis* and they were also termed as *kafirs*.

The socio-economic facts refuted the idea of equality in the Islamic society.⁶ Within the fold of Islam there were different social classes:⁷ (i) The *Ahl-i-Daulat*, or the ruling class, comprising the royal family, the nobility and the army; (ii) *Ahl-i-sa'adat*, or the intelligentsia, comprising the *ulema*, the *qazis*, the *sayyids*, men of learning and men of letters; (iii) the *Ahl-i-murad*, or the class catering for pleasure—comprising musicians, minstrels and dancing girls. There were two more classes which formed the lowest strata of the Muslim society. The

first mainly consisting of the artisans, peasants, shopkeepers and petty traders while the second included the *Qalandars* and other beggars. The slaves could also be added to the latter class. But the marked difference was that the slaves did not enjoy that respect which many of the beggars did. The nobility was divided into two categories: (i) *Ahl-i-saif* (men of the sword) and (ii) *Ahl-i-Qalam* (men of the pen). The former were either the military commanders or those whose power was based on the military strength. The latter were the religious leaders and the administrators, of whom the former were certainly the more powerful.

One important feature of the social structure of the Muslim society was that with a long stay in India, it had got Indianised. There was an inevitable process of contact, interaction and cross-fertilization. Both the cultures influenced each other in large number of fields such as religion, philosophy, art, food and dress habits, language, political ideas, administration and general way of life. This fusion was the result not of a wilful co-operation but of being placed together for such a long time. Sufism, though came to India many years before the establishment of Sultanat of Delhi, was influenced by Hindu thought, belief and practices. 'The very conception of loving God and relation between God and soul as one of the beloved and the lover are peculiar to Hinduism and were adopted by the *Sufis* in India.'⁸ The Chishti *silsilah* 'adopted many Hindu customs and ceremonials in the initial stages of the development of their *silsilah* in India. The practice of bowing before the *shaikh* (head of the *Khanqah*), presenting water to visitors, circulating *Zanbil* (a bowl made of dried and hollow gourd), shaving the head of new entrants to the mystic circle, audition parties (*sama*) and the *chillah-i-maqus* had close resemblance to Hindu and Buddhist practices.'⁹

Fairs and festivals played an important role in the life of a Muslim. The *Aqiqah* (shaving of head or Hindu *mundan*) ceremony was usually performed on the seventh day and the

3. P.N. Chopra, *The Impact of Islam on India*, p. 284

4. Murray and Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan*, Calcutta 1959, p. 36

5. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 28

6. Kanwar Muhammed Ashraf, *The life and Condition of the People of Hindustan (1200-1550)*, *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 170

7. Khavand Mir, *Humayun Nama*, cf. K.M. Ashraf, *The life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 54

8. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 76

9. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th Century*, p. 178-79

first shaving of the child was done on that day.¹⁰ The next important ceremony was *bismillah* (sending the child to *maqtab* for schooling). This was performed when a boy was four years four months and four days old.¹¹ Circumcision or *sunnat* ceremony was performed with great festivity before the child attained the age of five. The festival of *Shab-i-Barat* was celebrated like the Hindu festival of *Shivaratri*. The Muslim *ha/to nuh* (decorating the bride) was perhaps an imitation of the Hindu *solah shringar*. The festival of *Id* was celebrated with all its bustle. Many mausoleums of saints and *Pirs* attracted great number of devotees from all walks of life. Sometimes even the muslim rulers paid *ziarat* to these places.

The Musalmans also believed in superstitions. Almost all the Mughul princes got their horoscopes prepared. Emperor Akbar is said to have postponed his visit to Fatehpur to see his 'new-born son, Salim, in deference to a belief prevalent among the Hindus that whenever God, after long expectation, has bestowed an auspicious child, he be not produced before the honoured father till after a long delay.¹² Before taking any expedition, the emperors usually consulted the astrologer. They also believed in auguries and necromancy. Thus, we see that 'there were several gradations between the highest and the lowest points of Indo-Muslim culture, not unrelated to the social gradations.'¹³

HINDU SOCIETY

'The Hindu society presented a sorry spectacle on the eve of the Turkish invasion of our country.'¹⁴ The famous scholar Alberuni who came to India with Mahmud of Gazni studied Sanskrit language, Hindu religion and thought. He recorded that there were four *varnas* among the Hindus: the *Brahmna*,

10. T.P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam*, London 1885, p. 51.

11. *Loc. Cit.*

12. Abul Fazal, *Akbar Nama*, Tr. Eng. H. Beveridge, 1904, Vol. II, p. 505

13. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 47

14. *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 20

the *Kshatriya*, the *Vaishya* and the *Sudra*.¹⁵ There were number of sub-castes in each *varna*.¹⁶ The number of mixed castes had gone upto 64, and these too were divided into two groups. Those belonging to *anuloma* group (born of higher caste males and lower caste females) were considered *dvija* (twice born); the first being physical birth and the second the initiation into caste system. Such Hindus were entitled to sacred thread and other sacraments; but the *pratiloma* (born of lower caste fathers and higher caste mothers) were considered as belonging to low caste.¹⁷

'The continuance of caste system was secured by its being made hereditary, the primitive taboo on commensality became a caste law, and this in turn made it necessary to define marriage limits, leading to elaborate rules of endogamy and exogamy. The basis and continuance of the caste system depended not on the four-fold division but on the vast network of sub-castes, which was intimately connected with occupation.'¹⁸ Many *Brahmans* adopted the occupation of the *Kshatriyas* and many *Sudras* 'in the teeth of the canonical rule forbidding the lower *varnas* to take up the functions of the higher ones, assumed the *Kshatriyas*' occupation of ruling and fighting.'¹⁹ Alberuni's statement does not seem to be correct that even the *Vaish* was not allowed to hear or recite *vedic mantras* and if he uttered the sacred word his tongue was cut off.²⁰ It is evident that during the Sultanat period many Brahmins who could not earn their livelihood by scholistic pursuits, were allowed by the new *Smritis* to pursue agriculture through hired labour, and in times of distress they could themselves cultivate the fields.²¹

Many *Kshatriyas* like the *Brahmnas* were also compelled to

15. Edward C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India* (Eng. Tr.) London, 1914, p. 100

16. *Ibid.*, p. 102

17. *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 20

18. Romila Thapar, *A History of India*, Vol. I, Penguin Books Reprint 1972, p. 40

19. U.C. Ghoshal, *Struggle for Empire*, p. 475

20. *Alberuni's India*, p. 125

21. *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 21

change their occupation. 'With the loss of Rajput sovereignty, the *Brahmnas* lost their traditional patronage.'²² 'But it does not necessarily mean that the *Brahmnas* suffered in prestige due to loss of patronization by the new rulers. They increased their influence over the Hindu masses and consolidated their informal authority and personal influence'²³ by teaching in the *pathshalas* and performing various rites and ceremonies for those who engaged them as their family priests.²⁴ The *Kshatriyas* mostly engaged themselves in administration, trade and even *shahukara* (money lending). During the Lodhi times 'only Brahmans and Khatri in the Punjab were allowed to learn Persian and account keeping which entitled them to hold positions like *diwan*, *qanungo*, *tahsildar*, *girdawar* and *munshi* etc.'²⁵

Although the *Sudras* had no respect in the Hindu society, they had their own code of ethics, appropriate to their own station in life.²⁶ They also seriously believed in the caste system and made it more complex by maintaining many *samskaras*. For example, in Panjab, the Ramdasia *chamar* would not intermarry the *ratia* or *Mona* who skinned dead animals, and the *Mirasi* who did not sing with prostitutes would take a wife from those who did, but not give one in exchange.²⁷

Vivaha (marriage) is most important of all the Hindu *samskaras*.²⁸ Abu I Fazal held: 'If there be no marriages then the fountain-head of humanity shall become choked and the stream of divine benevolence shall sink into the sand.'²⁹ Socio-religious and political circumstances compelled a father

22. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 50

23. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, p. 192-93

24. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 51

25. *Ibid.*, p. 29

26. S.K. Saksena, *Moral Philosophy of India in Studies in the Cultural History of India*, p. 418

27. G.S. Chhabra, *Social and Economic History of the Panjab (1849-1901)*, 1962, p. 120

28. Raj Bali Pande, *Hindu Samskaras: A Socio-religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments*, Vikrama Publications, Bhadaini. Banaras, 1949, p: 261

p. *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, (Translation) H. Beveridge, p. 677

to have his daughter married as earlier as possible. Girls were married well before the age of puberty.³⁰ The Hindus strictly conformed to Manu's instructions that a bridegroom should be older than his bride.³¹ In Sultanat period, it is very difficult to find out even stray cases where the husband is younger than his bride.

The position of women in the society was not quite encouraging. They were considered socially and spiritually inferior to man. 'The social laws and customs stamped her with sort of mental deficiency.'³² On the advent of Muslims in our country their position further worsened. Becoming *sati* on the funeral pyre of the deceased husband, was not un-common. Alberuni says that a widow had to choose between two alternatives, viz. remaining a widow all her life or burning herself alive on the funeral pyre of her dead husband; and she usually chose the latter alternative.³³ The practice of performing *jauhar* was prevalent among the Rajputs. When the husbands fought to death, their wives performed a dreadful and collective feat by throwing themselves in the burning pyre. Very old women and mothers did not become *satis*.³⁴ But the society did not give due respect to the widows, and ill-treated them as long as they lived.³⁵

The Hindu kings were generally polygamous. Besides married wives, they kept dozens of concubines. Excepting the kings, intercaste marriages were out of fashion.³⁶ Unlike Muhammadans, the Hindus 'thoroughly examined the family to be related.'³⁷ The marriage was not approved of 'if the genealogical lines of either of the paternal and maternal ancestry unite within fifth degree of ascent, if in the two

30. P.N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughul Age*, Agra 1963, p. 111

31. Rajbali Pande, *Hindu Samskaras*, p. 336

32. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 134

33. Alberuni's *India*, p. 155

34. *Loc. cit.*

35. *Lcb. cit.*

36. Abul Fazal, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. III (tr.) H.S. Jarrett 1894 revised by Sir Jadunath Sarkar 1948, p. 310

37. P.N. Chopra, *Socio/ Life during the Mughul Age*, p. 19

paternal genealogies they unite in any generation; if in the paternal genealogies of both parties consanguinity through female occurs in the sixth generation by mother's side.³⁸

The Hindu society remained practically static throughout the medieval age (A.D. 1200-1800).³⁹ 'In that society the strong in general tyrannised over the weak—the ruler over the ruled, the upper classes over the lower classes, the Muslims over the Hindus and man over the woman.'⁴⁰ The general Hindu took pride in his rich heritage and himself did little to add to it his due share. Alberuni observed: 'The Hindus believed that there was no country like theirs, no nation like theirs and no science like theirs.'⁴¹

The social, religious and political ideas of Ravidas matured in the age when the process of general decay and degeneration had completely engulfed the whole of the Indian Sub-continent. He was one of those greatest saints of medieval times who endeavoured to bring about social reforms in the country. He was a powerful exponent of casteless society. He refused to recognise the traditional *fouv-varnas*. Instead he interpreted this division in his own way. He said that a person by merely taking birth in a high caste family did not have the right to be called a *Brahman*. Infact, a *Brahman* is one who recognises the Lord⁴² A person who has renounced lust, wrath, pride and greed deserves to be called a *Brahman** -About the *Kshatriya* Ravidas says that one who sacrifices his all for the mitigation of troubles and miseries of others is a true *Kshatriya** And a

38. *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 310

39. *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 27

40. A.C. Arora, *Society as depicted in 'Asa di war'* Punjab History Conference proceedings, Patiala 1970, p. 168

41. *Alberuni's India*, p. 371

42. *Unche kill ke karnai brahman koe na hoe jaujanhai braham atma Ravidas keh brahman soi*, Ravidas : *Sakhi* 134, p. 135

43. *Kam krodh mad lobh taj jau kare dharam kakar Soi Brahman janihe keh Ravidas bichar*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 135, p. 136

44. *Din-dukhi ke het jau barai apne pran Ravidas uh nar sur ko sancha chhatri Jan*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 138, p. 139

Vaishya is one who earns his livelihood through truthfulness,⁴⁵ and sells his commodities, weighed in the balance of Truth, on the shop of Truth.⁴⁶ This is a metaphorical reference. To the saints, true trade (*sacha sauda*) meant dealing in God's Name. Man is referred to as His *banjara*. He should deal in His Name. It will give him absolute peace and perennial bliss as his earning.⁴⁷ Ravidas has given an interesting interpretation of the *sudra*. According to him, one who is very pious, should be called *sudra*.TM A [person who leads impure and impious life cannot be pronounced as *sudra*. To him, the word '*sudra*' means 'pious'. He is first among the medieval saints who has given revolutionary interpretation of a word which was pronounced with contempt and which signified the lowest position of a class in the then prevalent caste system. He held the view that one's caste must not be determined on the basis of one's birth but actions.⁴⁹ He strongly condemned the four *varna* and pleaded that the *brahmana*, the *kshatriya*, the *vaish* and the *sudra*, all belonged to one caste.⁵⁰ He felt that unless caste system vanished, there was no possibility of national

45. *Ravidas bais soi janiye jau satkar kamai Pun kamai sada lahe lorai sarbat sukhai*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 140, p. 141

46. *Sanchi hati baith kar sauda sancha de Takkari tol sanch ki Ravidas Bais hai soi*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 141, p. 142

47. *Hau banjaro Ram ko sahaj karau biopar main Ramnam dhan ladia bikh ladi sansar*. Ravidas : *Gauri Bairagni*, *Adi Granth*, p. 346

48. *Ravidas jau at pivt hai soi sudar jan Jau kukarmi asudh jan tin hi na sudar man*. Ravidas : *Sakhi* 142, p. 144

49. *Janam jat kau chhar kar karni jat pardhan iheo bed ko dharam hai karai Ravidas bkhan*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 122, p. 126

50. (i) *Bedparhepandit banio ganth panhi tau chamar Ravidas manush Ik hai nam dharai hain char*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 124, p. 127

(ii) *Ravidas jat mat puchhiye kajat ka pat Bahman khatri bais sml saban ki ikjat*. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 127, p. 129

integration.⁵¹ One's caste cannot be an impediment in one's attainment of salvation. The caste-barriers could not obstruct Balmiki, Namdev, Kabir, Trilochan, Sadna and Sena from attaining it.⁵² All of them belonged to the so-called low castes.

Ravidas shows little regard for the Hindu scriptures like *Vedas* and *Puranas*. He feels that uttering His Name is more beneficial than sacred injunctions.⁵³ He condemned brahminical hypocrisy. A *tilak* on one's forehead and a rosary in one's hand looked scandalous to him. He felt that the use of this type of meticulous apparel was aimed at misleading the world.⁵⁴ He did not attach any importance to *dehra* (Hindu Temple) and *masjid* (Muslim mosque). To him, bowing of the head at these places was useless, because He is omnipresent. The Hindu way of going to temples and Muslim way of going to mosques for worship did not find favour with him.⁵⁵

The holy places of Hindu worship—Mathura, Dwarka, Kashi and Haridwar—did not appeal Ravidas. He felt that He was

51. *J at jat main jat liaijion kelan main pat*

Ravidas na manush jur sakain jau laujat najat

Ibid., Sakhi 128, p. 130

52. (i) *Re chit chet chet achet kahe na Balmikheh dekh*

kis jat te kill padhe amrio Ram bhagat bisekh

Ravidas: Raga Kedara, Adi Granth, p. 1124

(ii) *Namdev Kabir Tilochan Sadhna Sen tare*

keh Ravidas sun hore sant hau har jeo te sabhe sare

Ibid., Raga Maru, The Adi Granth, p. 1106

53. *Ravidas : Raga Sorath, Adi Granth, p. 658*

54. *Mathai tilak hath japmala jag thagne ku swang banaxia,*

marg chhad kumarg dehkai sanchi prit bin Ram na paia

Ravidas: Sakhi 66, p. 67

55. (i) *Dehra ar masit mahin Ravidas na sis nivai*

jih lau sis nivawna so thakur sab jai

Sakhi 61, p. 68

(ii) *Hindu puje dehra musulman masit*

Ravidas puje us Ram ku jih nirantar preet

Sakhi 67, p. 70

(iii) *Turk masiti ailah dhundai dehre Hindu Ram gusain*

Ravidas dhundia Ram Rahim ku jeh masit dehra nahin

Sakhi 73, p. 74

in the heart. One was required to search Him there, and not at the so-called holy places.⁵⁶ By preaching that all men are born equal and by denouncing caste-rigours, Ravidas's verses give us an inherent idea of social equality. He maintained that the idea of one's belonging to a high or low caste was totally irrelevant to one's salvation.

About life and death, Ravidas says that man is ignorant about this mystery. He feels that God alone can light or blow out the lamp of life. He is the creator, the preserver and the destroyer of the Universe.⁵⁷ Neither one should be jubilant over a birth, nor should one be grieved at a death.⁵⁸ This idea is akin to the one conveyed in the Gita.⁵⁹

Ravidas gives true qualities of a real *sadhu* at length. He says that a person who does not get himself entangled with worldly objects, does not care for pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow and takes delight in obtaining shelter in His Name, is a true *sadhu*.⁶⁰ And a person, who gives up pride, is without hate, cares more for the comforts of others, and is soft-spoken, be called a *sadhu*. One, who has got the virtue of forgiveness, and whose mind does not hanker after worldly desires, deserves to be called a *sadhu*.⁶¹ A true *sadhu* always utters His Name and sacrifices his all for the sake of the Name.⁶²

From this brief discussion, we reach the conclusion that Ravidas had a comprehensive knowledge of contemporary society. Although we gather an impression from his verses

56. *Ka Mathura ka Dwarka ka Kasi Haridwar*

Ravidas khoja di! apna tau milia dudar.

Ravidas : Sakhi 12, p. 74

57. *Jiwan jot kaise jage kaiso hoe ant*

Ravidas manush na janeh janat hai bhagwant

Ibid., Sakhi 82, p. 85

58. *Ravidas janme kau haras ka marne kau ka sok*

bajigar ke khel kuu samjhat nahi lok

Ibid., Sakhi 83, p. 86

59. (i) *Srimad Bhagvad Gita* (exegesis) Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 23rd Ed.

1975, 2.22, p. 41

(ii) *Ibid., 2.21, p. 43*

60. *Ravidas : Sakis 84-98. pp. 88-101*

61. *Loc. cit.*

62. *Loc. cit.*

that he does not think in terms of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' communities, yet he shows greater interest in the Hindu society than in the Muslim. He vehemently condemns the Hindu beliefs and practices, the four *varnas* and hypocrisy of the *pandit*. In case of Muslim society, he makes a passing reference to *Mulla*, but does not touch their caste-rigours. Like Guru Nanak, who was his contemporary, Ravidas's denunciation of contemporary society is related to his idea of salvation. He condemns all the *karmkand* and recommends His Name. Ravidas condemns useless rites and customs, but he does not point out the social evils of the society. He hints at the practice of drinking, but not for the sake of condemnation. He says that one should not take to drinking because its intoxication is of ephemeral nature. In a way, it is no condemnation. But we should not forget that with Ravidas's denunciation of society starts altogether a new chapter of social history. It was the beginning of an epoch.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEMPORARY POLITICS AND RAVIDAS

RAVIDAS LIVED in an age of political upheavels and disintegration. The Tughlaq dynasty even under its most illustrious ruler Firoz Tughlaq (1351-1388) was in dole-drums. In old age, his power and judgment began to fail him. The last year of his reign (August-September 1387 to 21st September 1388) was strife-torn which aggravated his miseries. After his death on 21st September 1388 a struggle for power began. Frequent change of overlordship became a characteristic feature of the age. Between A.D. 1388-1412 a period of 25 years witnessed kaleidoscopic changes. After the death of Firoz Tughliq till the end of the Tughluq dynasty, as many as seven persons tried their luck. 'The Sultanate of Delhi lost its all-India character during the weak reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq and became, in fact, a provincial kingdom. The image of political unity appeared to be irretrievably lost. His worthless successors were incapable even of maintaining the truncated heritage which he had left.'¹ Apart from many other causes, the main cause of the political upheaval of the Sultanat of Delhi was its feudalistic character. The function of administering civil and criminal justice in the *iqtas* was in the hands of those persons who were considered to be loyal to their overlords. They raised their own armies, collected taxes and maintained law and order in their specific areas. Those governing far-flung areas, frequently rose in rebellions. Their frequency increased altogether if the Sultan happened to be a weakling. Political upheavals like

1. Muhammad Habib and Khali;] Ahmad Nizami, (Ed.) *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. V, *The Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)* 1970, p. 619
2. Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and his Times*, Panjabi University, Patiala 1971, p. 1

dethronement and change of rulers in quick succession adversely affected the well-being and prosperity of the masses. Circumstances and conditions of a time exercise great influence upon a person and unless these are reformed or changed, the chances of the right and desired development of a person remain gloomy.³

In A.D. 1398, the Sultanat of Delhi was invaded by a Barlas Turk, Amir Timur who had by then humbled Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. The fast deteriorating political activity at Delhi gave him the much desired opportunity. In April, 1398 he issued out of Samarqand. Like the Mongols, he used shock tactics of plundering and massacring the natives. Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Tughluq and his Prime Minister Mallu Iqbal offered a very feeble resistance to the invader. The city was exposed to the invader. Delhi was occupied on 18th December, 1398. The Hindus were particularly hard-hit. 'High towers were built with the heads of the Hindus and their bodies became the food of ravenous beasts and birds.' The invader stayed in Delhi for a fortnight and acquired so much wealth that he would have never dreamt of it. 'After inflicting on India more misery than had ever been by any conqueror in a single campaign', Timur crossed back the Indus on 19th March, 1399. 'He left our country prostrate and bleeding. There was utter confusion and misery throughout Northern India.'

'The Sultanate of Delhi became a very pale shadow of its former self.'⁴ Delhi's grip over provinces like Gujrat, Malwa, Jaunpur, Bengal and Sindh became very feeble. In 1412, with the death of Mahmud Shah, the Tughluq dynasty came to an end. Khizer Khan made himself ruler of Delhi (A.D. 1414-1421). He paid allegiance to Shah Rukh, a son of Amir Timur and did not seem to have struck coins or read the *Khutba* in his name. Perhaps he did not feel himself secure, and wanted to avoid direct confrontation with the ambitious Turkish or Sayyid nobles. He also did not assume the title of Shah or

3. Darshan Singh, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, Chandigarh 1968, p. 208

4. A.L. Srivastava, *The Sultanate of Delhi*, Agra 1964 (4th Revised Edition), p. 224

5- A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and His Times*, p. 5

Sultan. But his son and successor Mubarak Shah (1421-34) struck his own coins, read the *Khutba* in his own name and declared himself to be the *Naib-i-Muminin*. Although he enjoyed all the insignia of royalty, yet the separatist tendency of the provincial governors could not be checked. They rose in rebellion time and again. Jasrath a Khokhar Chief, gave constant trouble and had his eye set upon the conquest of Delhi. In league with Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir, whom Jasrath had helped in his ascendancy, the khokhars under the leadership of Jasrath raided Jullundur, Sarhind, Lahore and Depalpur, but they were defeated.

On 19th February 1434, 'the cultured prince' Mubarak was assassinated, while he was preparing for Friday prayers.⁶ His nephew Muhammad Shah⁷ (A.D. 1434-43) succeeded him. During his regime, Multan became independent. Bahlol Lodhi, the chief of Sarhind annexed a major part of the Panjab. In 1441, the Shah gave Depalpur and Lahore to Bahlol and asked him to put down Jasrath Khokhar. But he made peace with the later and seized territories upto Panipat. The Shah breathed his last in 1443.

Alauddin Shah succeeded his father but found himself to be absolutely incapacitated to hold the reins of the Sultanat and retired to Badaun in 1448, of which he had been the Governor before being crowned as Sultan. He left behind at Delhi two brothers of his wife as *Shahna-i-Shahr* and *Amir-i-koh*. They fell out and one of them was killed. The next day the people of the city killed the other brother also. They took possession of Delhi and summoned Bahlol to assume the reins of government.⁸ The latter occupied Delhi very promptly and opened correspondence with Sultan Alauddin to have a legal claim to the throne. He wrote a letter to the Sultan saying: 'Your Majesty's father brought me up. I have been acting as your deputy...without expunging your name from the *khutba*.' The Sultan replied: 'As my father used to address you as his son, I look upon you as my elder brother and resign the kingship to

6. A *Comprehensive History of India*, Vol.V *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 656

7. Muhammed Shah son of Farid Shah son of Khizr Khan.

8. A *Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. V, *The Delhi Sultanat*, p. 663

you. I shall live contented at Badaun.' This reply gave Bahlol an opportunity to justify his claim and occupation. It was perhaps the first example of transfer of sovereignty in the history of India. Bahlol ascended the throne of Delhi on 19th April, 1451 at a propitious hour selected by the astrologers.⁹ Thus, the inglorious reign of the Sayyids ended there. 'Of all the dynasties of the Sultanat period, the Sayyids had, next to the Khiljis, the shortest span of life—37 years.'¹⁰ Bahlol's accession marked the beginning of a new dynasty which ruled up to A.D. 1526.

Bahlol (1451-1489) was able to restore the lost prestige of the Sultanat of Delhi to great extent. But 'the Sharqis presented the most formidable menace to his rule.'¹¹ The Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur was founded by one Malik Sarwar, an eunuch in the service of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq.¹² During the days of turmoil, the former started extending his territories. 'His boundry in the north started from Koil, including all the rich districts of what is today known as Uttar Pradesh, and stretched North East to the district of Tirhut in North Bihar, and touched the boundry of Nepal.'¹³

Death in 1399 of Malik Sarwar robbed the Sharqis of an efficient administrator and a man with political insight. After him, Ibrahim Shah (1401-1440), Mahmud Shah (1440-1457) and Husain Shah (1458-1505) were some of the important Sharqi rulers. Sultan Bahlol Lodhi had a long-drawn struggle with the Sharqis. The most important event of his reign was his 'life and death struggle'¹⁴ against the Sharqis. He could achieve a partial success against the rulers of Jaunpur in 1486, when he was able to capture some of their Western territories. On his death in A.D. 1489, Bahlol left to his successor the legacy of a victorious struggle against the Sharqis. Sikandar

9. *Ibid.*, p. 673

10. *Ibid.*, p. 630

11. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 2

12. *A Comprehensive History of India*, p. 710

13. Dr. M-M. Sayeed, *The Sultante of Jaunpur*, thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the London University, cf. *A Comprehensive History of India*, p. 713

14. A.B. Pandey, *The First Afghan Empire in India (1451-1526)*, Calcutta 1956, p. 69

Lodhi (A.D. 1489-1517) carried this legacy to its logical conclusions by extirpating the Sharqi kingdom in A.D. 1495.¹⁵

Thus, we see that Banaras, where Ravidas was born, became a part of Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur by the time he grew to be a youngman. Jaunpur was a 'centre of culture, where men of letters and poets, scholars and saints assembled and shed lustre on the capital.'¹⁶ It was known as *Darus Suntr* (city of delights). The social, literary and political activity at Jaunpur must have influenced Ravidas, because Banaras was not far away from Jaunpur. Frequency of wars with the Sultans of Delhi, might have left ugly traces of devastation. 'Society's capacity for healing is not unlimited: even when external wounds are healed internal sores continue to cause pain.'¹⁷ Perhaps this pain led Ravidas to lead a purely vegetarian life,¹⁸ whereas his tribesmen are hard-core non-vegetarians.

If Guru Nanak 'was the first medieval Indian Saint to eondemn war,'¹⁹ Ravidas was the first to feel that alien rule was a curse.²⁰ But like Guru Nanak, Ravidas perhaps did not possess any clear-cut 'idea of political development in the country' because of the fact that Ravidas was not a widely-travelled person like Guru Nanak. The latter came into contact with people of all shades of life during his travels, whereas Ravidas mostly confined himself to Banaras and at the most, he is said to have paid visits to Rajasthan once or twice. Being away from Delhi which was often a scene of fequent political upheavals, Ravidas was perhaps unaware of the court-intrigues and the tyrannical character of the rulers. Secondly, Banaras was not as disturbed as the Punjab because of frequent invasions from the North-West frontier.

15. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 3

16. *A Comprehensive History of India*, p. 714

17. A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and His Times*, p. 9

18. *Ravidas jiv ku mar kar kaiso milhin khudae*
Pir pagember aulia koi na kahe samjhai
Ravidas : *Sakhi* 182, p. 182 *

19. Mohan Singh, *An Introduction to Panjabi Literature*, Amritsar 1951, p. 58

20. *Pradhinta paap hai jan lehu re mil*
Ravidas da prahin saun kaun kare hai peel.
Ravidas: *Sakhi* 192, p. 190

The areas around Banaras were comparatively peaceful all along these years.

However, it would be erroneous to believe that Ravidas completely lacked political sagacity. There are certain clues in his verses which help us in forming an idea of his reactions against the oppressive regime. He avers that the people were not prosperous. On this account, he is not satisfied with the authorities and wants such rule which is able to provide the basic necessities of life to the people.²¹ One of his verses in *Raga Gauri* in the *Adi Granth* clearly records his impressions about the sufferings of the people. He wants to live at a place, free from the worry of paying *khiraj*,²² where one does not need mercy of the authorities, where there is no fear of official favour being withdrawn, where the sovereignty is stable and where there is equal status for all.²³ All this gives the impression that people were smarting under heavy taxation, because it was a problem with them to get two square meals a day even. The concluding portion of the verse hints at the ephemeral nature of the worldly kingdom. It also tends one to believe that the unstable nature of the government affected the material condition of the people that is why Ravidas takes note of it. Thus, we see that he has recorded his dissatisfaction with the existing regime and is also conscious of the demerits of alien rule.²⁴

21. *Aisa chahun raj main jahan milai saban ko ann*
Chhot baro sabh sam basin Ravidas rahe parsann
Ravidas : *Sakhi* 194, p. 192

22. *Khiraj* was a land tax on the Hindus which varied from 1/4 to 1/2 during the period of our study.

23. *Begampura sahar kau nau*
Dukh andoh nahin tih than
Na tasvis Khiraj na maal
Khaufna khata na tars jua
Ab mohe khub vatan geh pai
Vhankher sada mere bhai
Kayam dayam sada patshahi •
Dom na som ek sa ahi

Ravidas : *Raga Gauri, Adi Granth*, p. 345

24. *Pradhin kau din kia pradhin bedin*
Ravidas das pradhin kau sab hi samjhe bin
Sakhi 19', p. 191

Ravidas has nowhere made mention of the administrative offices or the institutions. He has not pointed out the corrupt means adopted by many of the officials to extract money from people. He does not seem to have an idea of the legal status of the State. Perhaps he never gave thought to secular questions.

From one of his verses we gather a blurred image of his nationalist feeling. He is worried to see that people are caste-ridden. He seems to preach national integration.²⁵ He has used many phrases in his verses which show his knowledge of contemporary politics, government and administration: *khiraj*, *maal*, *patshahi*, *sultana-sultan*, *singhasan*, *raj*, *mahal*, *raja*, *narpati*, *chhatarpati*, *pradhin* and *pradhinta*, etc. He has made metaphorical use of political phraseology relating to God such as 'Raja Ram' and 'Raja Ram Chand.' every here and there.

25. *Jat jat main jat hai jion kelan main pat*
Ravidas na manush jur sakain jau lau jat na jat
Sakhi 128, p. 130

CHAPTER 5

SIMSM AND RAVIDAS

BEFORE SEEKING to establish any link between Sufism and Ravidas, let us draw an outline of Sufism. The word 'Sufi' is supposed to have been derived from various words. Some think that this word has been derived from a word '*safa*' meaning purity. Some derived it from '*Self*' meaning 'line', some from '*Su/o*' meaning 'chair'. Some derived from '*Bam Sufa*' which is an Arab tribe. Some derived it from '*Saft-ul-kifa*' (*fabnkaguchha*). Some others derive it from the Greek word '*So/ia*' which means 'knowledge'. But it seems to have been derived from '*Sup*' meaning 'wool' because it was considered that they (the Sufis) wore woollen garments and it was a symbol of divine love and simplicity. According to Al-Masudi, the first Caliph also used it. 'The author of the oldest extant Arabic Treatise on Sufism Abu Nasr-al-Sarraj, declared that in his opinion the word '*Sufi*' is derived from V(wool).'

The word '*Sup*' was used prior to this. According to an Arabian writer Jami, the word 'Sufi' was used for the first time for a resident of Syria. In A.D. 816 A.D. this word became popular. The first Sufi writer was one Yahya Bin Muaz, a resident of Ray. He died in the year A.D. 821. The first centre of Sufism was 'Kufa' where a semi-Shia sect began to preach it. The word '*Sofia*' about the same time was used for rebellion in Alexandria in A.D. 840. In 864, Baghdad became its centre. There the Sufis came into clash with the '*Midhf*' and '*Qazis*' and therefore, many Sufis were punished.

The history of Sufism can be divided into three periods.

The first period lasted from the beginning of the 9th Century to the end of the 9th Century. In this period, the Sufis believed in simple peaceful life, daily prayers, meditations, individual love for God and spiritual progress. They considered outward rituals and show as useless.

The second period lasted from the end of the 9th Century upto the beginning of the 11th Century. The Sufis advanced a new doctrine. This doctrine was 'Pantheism' (that everything is God and God is everything). In this period all the Sufis said that they were God. For example, a Persian Sufi Abu Yazid who died in A.D. 875 called himself the 'Throne of God', '*Lohe-Mehfuz*' and 'I am the pen of God.' He also said that he was *Quran*. This doctrine was based on the belief that all are Gods. Junaid died in A.D. 910. He called himself the manifestation of God. Ibn Tustri, who died in A.D. 896 said, 'I am the proof of God.' The last and the greatest man of this line was Mansur. He died in A.D. 922. He openly preached, 'I am God'. He raised the slogan of '*An-al-Haq*', and was put to gallows. He gained proficiency in Ayurveda and Chemistry. He came to India, and met the '*Yogis*' and is said to have written 46 books.

The third period lasted from the end of 11th Century onwards. In this period Sufism reconciled with orthodox religion. In this period there was danger of Islam being divided into two parts. It was due to the efforts of Al-Athri and Al-Ghazali that Islam averted the danger of being divided. Al-Ghazali produced a doctrine of '*Wahdat-ush-shuhud*' (unity of appearance). The Sufi doctrine was '*Wahdat-ul-Wujud*' (Unity of being). By the theory of Al-Ghazali, the rupture in Islam was repaired.

'Sufism, is patience under God's commanding and forbidding and resignation in the events determined by divine providence.'¹² 'To be a Sufi means to abide continuously in God and to live at peace with men.'¹³ Another source puts the above idea in these lines : 'Mysticism is a religious experience in which the feeling of God is at its maximum of intensity.'

One who denounces worldly objects and devotes himself

Ismael Hastings, (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 10

2. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 49
3. Margaret Smith, *Al-Ghazali, The Mystic*, p. 104

CHAPTER 5

SUFISM AND RAVIDAS

BEFORE SEEKING to establish any link between Sufism and Ravidas, let us draw an outline of Sufism. The word 'Sufi' is supposed to have been derived from various words. Some think that this word has been derived from a word 'safe?' meaning purity. Some derived it from 'Saf' meaning 'line', some from 'Sufa' meaning 'chair'. Some derived from 'Bam Sufa' which is an Arab tribe. Some derived it from 'Saft-ul-kifa' (*Balon ka guchha*). Some others derive it from the Greek word 'Sofia' which means 'knowledge'. But it seems to have been derived from 'Sup' meaning 'wool' because it was considered that they (the Sufis) wore woolen garments and it was a symbol of divine love and simplicity. According to Al-Masudi, the first Caliphs also used it. 'The author of the oldest extant Arabic Treatise on Sufism Abu Nasr-al-Sarraj, declared that in his opinion the word 'Sufi' is derived from 'Suf' (wool).'

The word 'Suf' was used prior to this. According to an Arabian writer Jami, the word 'Sufi' was used for the first time for a resident of Syria. In A.D. 816 A.D. this word became popular. The first Sufi writer was one Yahya Bin Muaz, a resident of Ray. He died in the year A.D. 821. The first centre of Sufism was 'Kufa' where a semi-Shia sect began to preach it. The word 'Sofia' about the same time was used for rebellion in Alexandria in A.D. 840. In 864, Baghdad became its centre. There the Sufis came into clash with the 'Mullas' and 'Qazis' and therefore, many Sufis were punished.

The history of Sufism can be divided into three periods.

1. James Hastings, (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 10

The first period lasted from the beginning of the 9th Century to the end of the 9th Century. In this period, the Sufis believed in simple peaceful life, daily prayers, meditations, individual love for God and spiritual progress. They considered outward rituals and show as useless.

The second period lasted from the end of the 9th Century upto the beginning of the 11th Century. The Sufis advanced a new doctrine. This doctrine was 'Pantheism' (that everything is God and God is everything). In this period all the Sufis said that they were God. For example, a Persian Sufi Abu Yazid who died in A.D. 875 called himself the 'Throne of God', '*Lohe-Mehfuz*' and 'I am the pen of God.' He also said that he was *Quran*. This doctrine was based on the belief that all are Gods. Junaid died in A.D. 910. He called himself the manifestation of God. Ibn Tustri, who died in A.D. 896 said, 'I am the proof of God.' The last and the greatest man of this line was Mansur. He died in A.D. 922. He openly preached, 'I am God'. He raised the slogan of '*An-al-Haq*', and was put to gallows. He gained proficiency in Ayurveda and Chemistry. He came to India, and met the 'Yogis' and is said to have written 46 books.

The third period lasted from the end of 11th Century onwards. In this period Sufism reconciled with orthodox religion. In this period there was danger of Islam being divided into two parts. It was due to the efforts of Al-Athri and Al-Ghazali that Islam averted the danger of being divided. Al-Ghazali produced a doctrine of '*Wahdat-ush-shuhud*' (unity of appearance). The Sufi doctrine was '*Wahdat-ul-Wujud*,' (Unity of being). By the theory of Al-Ghazali, the rupture in Islam was repaired.

'Sufism, is patience under God's commanding and forbidding and resignation in the events determined by divine providence.'² 'To be a Sufi means to abide continuously in God and to live at peace with men.'³ Another source puts the above idea in these lines : 'Mysticism is a religious experience in which the feeling of God is at its maximum of intensity.'

One who denounces worldly objects and devotes himself

2. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 49

3. Margaret Smith, *Al-Ghazali, The Mystic*, p. 104

to God wholeheartedly and falls in love with Him, may be called a Sufi. A Sufi always feels that 'the universe as a whole, is the product of God's spontaneous yet necessary activity of self-realisation or self-Manifestation.' The Muslim mysticism sprang from the doctrine of *Wahadat-ul-wujud* or the unity of Being—a doctrine that identified the *Haq* and *Khalaq*—the creator and the created. It means in plain language that God is the unity behind all plurality and the Reality behind all phenomenal appearance.⁴ Ravidas also seems to follow this doctrine, when he says that man is searching for God outside, whereas He is present in his heart. Man should meditate and concentrate on Him. He will find Him in his heart.⁵ Again, he says that the Creator of the Universe is one. His light is present in everyone.⁶ The idea is akin to Sufi's doctrine of 'pantheism' (everything is God). The Sufis believe that 'the mosque that is built in the heart of saints, is the place of worship for all, for God dwells there.'⁷

The Sufis preached that if you want to abide in God, live at peace with men. This Universe is the Creation of God. In other words He manifests Himself in his creations. Ravidas also gives the same idea. He says that you are searching for Him in the forests. He is not there. If you want to find Him, love his men.⁸

The very basis of Sufism is love and devotion for God. The conception of a loving God and the relation between God and soul are like the one between the beloved and a lover. This idea is against the tenets of Islam. According to Islamic *shar'a* God, who is to be worshipped, cannot be beloved

4. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, pp. 76-77

5. *Bahar khojat ka phire ghat bhitari hi khoj*
Ravidas unman sadh kar dekhho piya ku aj
Ravidas : *Sakhi* 17, p. 18

6. *Ravidas jo karta sarishti ka voh to karta ek*
Sabh meh jot sarup ik kahe kahun anek
Ravidas : *Sakhi* 56, p. 57
also see *Sakhi* 55, p. 57

7. R.A. Nicholson, *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*, p. 57

8. *Ban khoje pi na milhe ban meh pritam nah*
Ravidas pi hai base rahio manav premhi malt .
Ravidas: *Sakhi* IS, p. 16

(*Mashuq*) Ravidas has frequently used the words '*Pritam*' and '*Piya*' for God.⁹

The Sufis practised austerities and led a life of devotion. In order to attain '*Ma'rifa*' or '*vras*' (Union) with God, a Sufi passed through ten *Maqamats* (stages). These are : *tauba* (repentance) *warn* (abstinence), *zuhd* (piety), *faqr* (poverty), *sabr* (patience), *shukr* (gratitude), *khauf* (fear), *raja* (hope), *twakkul* (contentment) and *riza* (submission to the Divine will). In the verses and practical life of Ravidas there is a recurring note of piety, poverty, patience, fear of God, temperance and submission to the will of God.

Ravidas hints at '*ajapa jap*' or '*soahm*' (stūpr) which is similar to Sufi's '*An-al-Haq*'.¹⁰ A Sufi concentrates on God so much so that he sees nothing but God all around, in everything and every where. The *Futuhat-e-Makkiya* puts this idea in these lines:

'There is nothing but God, nothing in existence other than He; there is not even a 'there', where the essence of all things is one.'

In Ravidas's verses we find this idea also. He says to God if You are a lamp, I am the wick.¹¹ There is no difference between You and me. If You are gold, I am a bangle made of it. If You are water, I am a current of it.¹² The Sufi idea is akin to it when a Sufi saint feels:

'Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace thou and I with two form and with Two Figures but with one Soul Thou and I.'¹³

9. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 17, 18 pp. 18-19

10. *Ravidas aradhau dev ku ik man hoi dhar dhian*
Ajapa jap japat rahio sat nam sat nam.
Ibid., *Sakhi* 39, p. 41

11. *Jau turn diwra tau ham bati*
Ravidas: *Sorath* 5, *Adi Granth*, p. 658

12. *Tohi mohi mohi tohi antar kaisa*
Kanak katik jal tarang jaisa
Ibid., *Sri Raga*, *Adi Granth*, p. 345

13. Sir Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume, *The legacy of Islam*, p. 219

A Sufi always feels need of a teacher, *Shaikh* or *pir* to show him the Divine path. Without a teacher it is very difficult to reach communion with God—the Ultimate goal. A Sufi yearns for a meeting with God. The Sufi mystic says:

'In thy presence, T and 'Thou' have ceased to exist, they have become one, and the Way and the Seeker are one.'¹⁴

Ravidas also believed in the concept of *Guru*. For him, the *Guru* is like a '*parasmanV*. He feels that it is very difficult to find a perfect *guru* and that too with His benevolence.¹⁵

The Sufis strongly condemn the feeling of self-centredness. This self-centredness is another name for *haumai* (I-am-ness). The non-Indian Sufi Mystic Hafiz (d. A.D. 1390) says that 'man's concentration of attention on his individual self is the greatest of all evils between him and God.'¹⁶ Ravidas also maintains that *haumai* is a formidable enemy of man. Unless it disappears, the Name in one's heart cannot take shelter. *Haumai* and the Name are incompatible to each other.

The use of Persian and Arabic vocabulary in Ravidas's verses is the influence of Sufi saints. He uses several of these words: *khaliq*, *didar*, *avval*, *bekrar*, *adm*, *panah*, *tasvis*, *pagember*, *hazra-hazur*, *hanoz*, *bebakht*, *ishq*, *jawab*, *beadab*, *bad bakhat*, *badkar*, *be-dianat*, *gunahgar*, *gumrah*, *veeran*, *khauf*, *be-akal*, *barkhurdar*, *dozakh*, *bislar*, *qadar*, *frishta*, *banda*, *khiraj*, *khidmatgar* etc.¹⁷

A careful study of Ravidas's verses gives us a peep into the fact that he did accept the influence of Sufi saints to some extent.

14. *Studies in Early Mysticism*, p. 9

15. A.M.A- Shustery, *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, Vol. II, p. 499

16. *Jab ham bote tab tu nahi ab tu hai mein nahi*

Ravidas: *Sorath I, Adi Granth*, p. 657

17. *Ravidas ji ki Bani*, pp. 1-34; also see *Raga Gauri, Adi Granth*, p. 345

CHAPTER 6

VAISHNAVISM AND RAVIDAS

VAISHNAVISM is a product of Vedic literature. This cult passed through various stages of development. It has been vividly called Vasdev, Satvat, Bhagwat and Panchratra. Generally, it is believed that there are ten incarnations of Vishnu. The most prominent among them were Rama and Krishna. It was perhaps on Dravidian soil that *Bhakti* received its decisive impetus and was nourished by the religious enthusiasm of the *Alvars* and the *Adiyars*. 'In the North of India, Vishnuism became the privileged vehicle by virtue of its sentimental effusions (sometimes coloured by eroticism), to which the "edifying" stories woven around Krishna lent themselves.'

Under the Influence of enlightenment, a man breaks with his past, starts preaching a new doctrine, and after many ordeals succeeds in gathering around himself a body of disciples from among whom shall be found his successor. After his disappearance, his biography is shrouded with legends: here lies the great influence of a *guru* on the Indian mind.²

We do not precisely know as to how and when *Shaivism* and *Vaishnavism* came into being.³ According to some scholars these religious sects resulted from Brahman-Kshatriya rivalry, which had started during the last days of Vedic age.⁴ The *Brahmanas* and the *Kshatriyas* worshipped Vishnu and Shiv as their chief deities. In the *Mahabharata* it is mentioned that a

1. Louis Renou, *Hinduism* (Ed.) Prentice Hall International, London 1961, pp. 46-47

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. K. Damodran, *Bhartiya Chintan Parampra*, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi, Year not given, p. 253

4. T.P.M. Mahadevan, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 457

section of *Brahmanas* opposed Shiva-worship.⁵ But this opposition proved futile because most of the rulers were *Kshatriyas*. They believed in the worship of the incarnations of Vishnu, Shiva and Sakti (power or energy of divine action, personalized as the consort of Shiva). Even some Kushan rulers in the first Century A.D. struck their own coins and got the images of *Shiva*, *Trisul*, and *Nandi* inscribed on them. But in the Third and Fourth Centuries A.D. we come across the 'Neo-Brahmanism'. The Gupta rulers worshipped Vishnu. It was perhaps for the first time that *Vaishnavism* came under royal patronage. During the reign of Raj Raja Chola (948-1013), the songs of Appar, Sambandhar and Sundarar were compiled in a *granth* named *Tirumure*. It is the holy *granth* of the *Vaishnavas*.

'Down in the South, the *Shiva* and the *Vaishnava* saints combined in the beginning of the Eighth Century to wean the people away from their allegiance to Buddhism and Jainism to win them over to the worship of Shiva and Vishnu.⁶ Buddhism and Jainism were in shambles in the Deccan. The *Shaiva* saints who advocated the *Bhagti marga* in the South, were called *Adiyar* (*Naynar*). The *Adiyars* numbered sixty-three between sixth and ninth Centuries.⁷ Prominent among them were Appar, Gyan, Sambandhar, Sundarar and Manakkavachkar.⁸ The *Vaishnava* saints who preached in the South, were called *Alvars*. According to a popular tradition there were twelve *Ahars*. Prominent among them were Tirunange *Alvar*, Kulsekhar *Alvar*, Tiruppan *Alvar*, Pariyaluvar and Nammalvar.

The *Adiyar* and *Alvar* saints 'began competing among themselves for the allegiance of the people.'⁹ These saints were roving sadhus who were accompanied by their followers. They waged a relentless crusade against Buddhism and Jainism and

5. *Bhartiya Chintan Parampra*, p. 253

6. (Dr.) S.S. Bal, *Life of Guru Nanak*, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, Chandigarh 1969, p. 6

7. *Bhartiya Chintan Parampara*, p. 254

8. *Loc. cit.* and also see Baldev Upadhiya, *Bhartiya Darshan*, 7th Revised Edition 1966, Kashi, p. 452

9. *The Life of Guru Nanak*, p. 7

succeeded in creating an atmosphere of hatred against these two religions. Very soon they got the royal patronage. The *Bhakti* songs of the *Vaishnava* saints are compiled in a *granth* called *Nalaiyarprabandham* or *biviyaprabandham*.¹⁰ The *Vaishnava* saints worshipped Vishnu as the Supreme Reality. They considered him as the leader of *Trimurti* (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). 'Brahma is a god who does not have great following; rarely has a temple been dedicated to him or a sect been formed in his name. Vishnu and Siva, on the other hand, are deities of the first order.'¹¹

The *Vaishnava* saints have depicted God as the lover and the *Bhakta* as the beloved in their devotional songs. Another popular relation between *Bhagwan* and *Bhakta* is that of the master and the servant, but the more favourite relation developed and strengthened by the *Alvars*, is that of the husband and wife of lover and beloved. *Bhagwan* is always described as a lover with pure, selfless, and unending love.

The *Alvars* and *Adiyars* 'took over a number of things which had helped Buddhism and Jainism in their long ascendancy in India. From Buddhism, they took over its devotionalism, its sense of transitoriness of the world, its conception of human worthiness, its suppression of desires and asceticism as also its rituals, the worship of idols and *stupas* or *lingum*, temples, pilgrimages, fasts and monastic rules and its idea of spiritual equality of all castes; from Jainism they took its ethical tone and its respect for animal life'¹² These new cults were more democratic in nature.¹³ They chose the language of the people to communicate their ideas. It won the popular appeal and the *Bhakti* movement in the South started sweeping everything before it. By the beginning of the Twelfth century, it was supreme in the entire Deccan with one of its greatest exponents Ramanuja.¹⁴ After its success in the Deccan, the *Bhakti* move-

10. *Bhartiya Chintan Parampara*, p. 255

11. Louis Renou, *Hinduism* (Ed.) Prentice Hall International, London 1961, p. 36

12. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad 1936, p. 86

13. *Bhartiya Chintan Parampara*, p. 255

14. *The Life of Guru Nanak*, p. 7

merit started moving towards the North. In the middle of the Fourteenth century, Ramanuja took it to the citadel of the Hindu orthodoxy in the North at Banaras.¹⁵

Now, the *Bhakti* was given a new course and it was no longer a subject of scriptures for theoretical discussion between the *RisMs* and their students, but it became an indispensable part of the life of the people.¹⁶ It is here that *Bhakti* canalised itself in a movement and came nearer to the life of the masses.¹⁷ It is an established fact that India-wide *Bhakti* movement originated in the South, with the advent of *Alvars* and *Adiyars*, though it received its sustenance from the past. Sankaracharya propagated Absolute Monism (*Advaitvad*) in the South. He is considered, though erroneously, to be a thinker who banked upon *Jnan* only for attaining the final Bliss. If we carefully study his writings, we find that in most of his works, especially in *Prabodh Sudhakar*, he has given an elaborate study of *Bhakti*, its nature and essentials. In fact, no theistic sect, in India, could remain aloof from *Bhakti*, and so was it with Sankaracharya and his *Advaitvad*.¹⁸ However, it is correct that he did not regard *Bhakti* as the ultimate end or the means to it. He himself asserts '*Bhakti* is the research of the self'¹⁹—but for the salvation he advocates supreme *Jnan*. *Bhakti* for him is only a method.

Ramanuja is one of the prominent Acharyas of *Srivaishnava samparda*. His philosophy is termed as *Visishtadvait*. To begin with, he believed in *Advaitvad* but under the influence of *Alvars* he shifted to *Vaishnavism*.²⁰ He based his philosophy on *epics*, *Puranas*, *Pancharatras*, and the writings of *Alvars*. Ramanuja condemned the *Advaitvad* of Sankaracharya. The former's cult is called *Sri Samparda* because *Sri* or *Lakshmi* is worshipped as Vishnu's wife. Ramanuja wrote voraciously. In *Vedarth Sangrah* he condemns Sankaracharya's and Bhaskara's philosophies. *Vedantsar* is an exegesis of *Brahmsutra*. *Vedantdeep*

15. *Loc. cit.*

16. (Dr.) Darshan Singh, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, Lyaal Book Depot, Ludhiana 1968, p. 27

17. *Loc. cit.*

18. *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, pp. 31-2

19. *Ibid.* p. 33

20. *Bhartiy.i Darshan*, Op. cit. pp. 336-7

is a commentary on *Brahmasutra*. *Gadyatirya* lays stress on *prapatti* or *sharnagti* (self-surrender). *Gitabhashya* is commentary on *Bhagwat Gita*. Ramanuja could not reconcile with Sankara's concept of *Maya*. He believed that this world is not an illusion but it is real and is of three-fold nature : *chit* (conscious), *achit* (un-conscious) and *Ishwara* (God) who is *Antaryami* (omniscient). *Sribhashya* is an authentic and detailed account of the principles of *Visishtadvaitvad*. So far many commentaries and exegeses have been written on *Sribhashya*. The Ramanuji *Srivaishnavas* paint their foreheads white.

The second *Vaishnava* is *Brahma Samparda* or *Madhavamam*. There is a tradition that *pavanputra* Hanuman got this *mat* from *vayu*, Bhim from *Pavanputra* and it was revealed by Bhim to *Anandatirtha*, who is also known as *Madhva*. The latter wrote 37 *granths* in all.²¹ The most significant are: *Brahmsutrabhashya*, *Anuviyakhyan*, *Chhandogya*, *Aitriya*, *Kath*, *Vrihadaranayak*, *Bhagvattatparyanirnaya*; *Mahabharattatparyanirnaya*, *Gita Tatparyanirnaya*, *Prapanchmithyatav-nirnaya* *Vishnutattav-nirnaya*. *Madhva* was an exponent of *Dvait* philosophy. He refuted the theory of Absolute monism, qualified monism and established the extreme dualistic nature of *Brahma*. Like Sankara, he does not build his philosophy on *Maya* and the self-luminous *Jnan*, but he believes that the world is real as it is perceived by us and the nature of *Jnan* is relative, i.e. distinctive.²² He believes in five-fold difference between the eternal entities (*panchbheda*): (i) God and individual soul, (ii) God and non-living matters, (iii) One soul and every other soul, (iv) Individual soul and matter and (v) The distinctive parts of the matter. These distinctions do not cease to exist, even after the soul has got salvation. Only *Ishwar* is independent (*svatantra*), the matter and soul are dependent (*partantra*). This uncompromising insistence on the 'total difference or otherness' could perhaps be considered a reaction against the *Advaita* school of thought, which in a sense, could be said to have 'dragged God down to man's level'.²³ The followers of *Brahma Samparda*,

21. *Bhartiya Darshan*, op. cit. p. 400 ; and also see (Dr.) K.R. Sundararajan, *Hinduism—Historical Survey*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1969, p. 11

22. *Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus*, pp. 36-7

23. *Hinduism—Historical Survey*, p. 11

daub their forehead with a white *tilak* which is like 'W' in shape. The inner line runs in black colour.²¹ There is no caste-barrier for new entrants. The *guru* cauterises the new follower, perhaps to purify him.

Vishnuswami²⁵ was the chief *acharya* of *Rudrasamparda*. He was succeeded by sants like Vallabha, Gyandev, Namdev and Trilochan who belonged to Vishnuswami's cult.²⁶ The life events of Vallabhacharya are connected with Kashi, Arail (Paryag) and Vrindaban. His was pure monism (*shudh advait-vad*).²⁷ According to this philosophy Brahma is source of all visible world and the soul is unchanging and immortal and resides in the heart of man. Brahma is the creator and destroyer of this world. Brahma's position is like that of a *Yogi* who creates various things with his wonderful powers, fondles with them and ultimately destroys them. Thus according to this philosophy the world is manifestation of Brahma.

The most important *acharya* of *Sanaksamparda* was Nimbarka²⁸, a Telang *Brahman*. The cult derived its name from a saint San Kumar who was the preceptor of renowned Naradji.

24. Gurbachan Singh, *Vaishnavamat te Bhagat Ravidas ji* (unpublished dissertation) for M.A. (Religious Studies) seen through the kindness of Dr. S.S. Bal.

25. "CrTT^ sir: S*# issrref ^Jst: \

26. tut ftr^fm ftr^i ^ *rfa *r<r i

srar*r fffere sr^sresr STR*? ^TST I
firrsiren ^nr fter I% <fer <RT^I n
^sn srar^wT w&t ^ ^ %n iix^rwxfa \

Bhakatmal, S-48

27. 5I3fr<I% ST: STIST: ^ifarsT: I
?r|a ^ t f t : srf: ^stejw sp: n
II!TIY^ERf?5f w:gfrRfHRt f?: I
^n^TinFT' sis ^ mPrew II

(5r3Ti?r<nw ^-^=0

28. 'Nimbarka' is said to be made of two words 'Nimb' (Neem Tree) and 'Ark' (the sun). The tradition is that Nimbarka was able to show the sun (ark) from a 'nimb' tree at night and earned this name.

The *acharyas* of this cult propagated *dvaitadvait* or *bheda-abheda* (dualism in non-dualism). According to this philosophy Brahma is definitely Absolute but is relative also. Nimbarka believed that the creation is not different from its creator, as a particle is not different from its source in nature, though it can differ in quality. He emphasised the adoration of Lord Krishna and his consort Radha. The torch of *Bhakti*, thus, travelled from South to North through Ramananda, a disciple of Ramanuja's Sri sect. Two incarnations of Vishnu, namely Rama and Krishna came into prominence. The epics and the *Puranas* provide fertile soil for the development of many religious sects. 'Krishna-Radha' worship characterized the Ramananda sect which, in its turn, gave rise to many sub-sects such as *Kabirpanthis*, *Malukdasis*, *Raidasis*, *Senapanthis*

All these sects, in general, and the *Vaishnavas* in particular disregarded the caste distinctions. They included in their folds men belonging to different castes and creeds. They saw no distinction between one and another. They believed in the transitoriness of the world and condemned asceticism, rituals, pilgrimages as well as fasts. As already discussed in this chapter, the *Vaishnava* saints (Alvars) took the *Bhakti* movement from South to the 'citadel of the Hindu orthodoxy' in the North at Banaras. Ravidas could not remain aloof from these developments.

Some scholars hold the view that Ravidas was a worshipper of *Thakur*,³⁰ but later on he shifted to *Vaishnav* worship.³¹ These beliefs do not seem to be correct. Perhaps the use of words like Ram, Raja Ram, Raghunath, Hari, Krishna, Madhav, Murari, Mukand, Gobind and Narayan has led many to draw an inference that Ravidas believed in *avtarvad*. In fact, these words are symbolic and are used for God who alone is the Absolute Reality. It is evident that the worshipper of one *avtar* cannot be the worshipper of another *avtar*. He has clearly mentioned in *Raga Malar*:

29. K.R. Sundararajan, *Hinduism—Historical Survey*, p. 12

30. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion, its Gurus, sacred writings and Authors*, Vol VI, New Delhi, 1963 (Reprint), pp. 316-17; and also see Gyani Lai Singh Sangrur, *Vaishnavmat te Sikh Dharam*, p. 57

31. *Loc. cit.*

'neither the Lord of Lakshmi (Vishnu), nor the Lord of Kailash (Shiv), nor anyone else is equal to those who repeat God's Name.'³²

Ravidas believed in the unity of God. He contemplated upon the formless Brahma.³³ With his own evidence, there remains little to be elaborated. A *Vaishnav* or a *Shaiv* would not say, 'Vishnu or Shiv are not equal to those who repeat God's Name.' However, it does not mean that Ravidas was, in no way, influenced by *Vaishnavism*. We know that the former was a disciple of Parmananda, who himself was a disciple of Ramananda. The cult of Rama as incarnation of Vishnu was popularized by Ramananda.³⁴ The latter 'made no great break from the past and made no attempt to establish complete social equality,³⁵ whereas Ravidas preached against the caste system and strongly condemned the four *varnas*. Like the *Vaishnavas*, he also composed verses in the language of the people. He denounced pilgrimage and fasts,³⁶ and repeatedly declared that there was no use of pilgrimage, if the heart was not cleansed of pride. The object of pilgrimage was not without but within oneself. He vehemently rejected the practice of celibacy and asceticism, of penances and austerities, of pilgrimages and formal religious exercises, worship of images and the authority

32. "Har japat teu jana padam kavlaspat
tas sam tul nahi an kou
ek hi ek anek hoi bishthario
an re an bharpur sou."

Ravidas : *Raga Malar, Adigranth*, p. 1293

The translation above is by M.A. Macauliffe.

33. "Nischal nirakar aj anupam nirbhai jat gobinda

(i) *Agam agochar achhar atarak nirgun ant ananda.*"

Ravidas : *Raidas ji ki Bani*, Belvedier Printing Works, Allahabad
1971. p. 24

(ii) "Niranjan nirakar nirlepi nirbikas nisasi" *Ibid.* p. 6

34. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 124

35. A-L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, p. 57

36. 'Tirath brat na karau andesa

Tumre charan kamal ka bharosa.'

Ravidas: *Raidas ji ki Bani*, p. 23; also see *Adi Granth*, p. 875

, of the so-called sacred texts.³⁷ Ravidas felt that giving up / food and water, boasting of knowledge and meditating in desolate caves, far from constituting *Bhakti*, imply hypocrisy. He condemned all hypocrisy as sham³⁸.

The *Vaishnavas* attached great importance to the *guru* who might be understood not as a person but as the inner voice of God. The *guru* kindles the spiritual fire, shows the path and leads to the goal. He is the most potent factor in uniting the devotees with the Lord.³⁹ Ravidas also believed in the concept of *guru*. To him, the *guru* was like philosopher's stone.⁴⁰

Ravidas has nowhere identified himself with any sect. He has referred to Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva as symbols of God. He accepted the influence of the *Vaishnava Alvars*, to some extent, but did not simply owe his allegiance to *Vaishnava* cult. He had his independent views and held a distinctive place among the saints of *Bhakti* movement.

37. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, pp. 37-8

38. *Ram nam bin jo kachhu kariye, so sab bharam kahai*
Prithvi Singh Azad, *Guru Ravidas*, New Delhi 1973, p. 87

39. Raj Kumar, *Origin and development of the Bhakti concept from Ancient times up to Guru Nanak*, p. 66

40. 'Param paras guru bhatiye
Purat likhat lilat
Unman man man hi mile
Chutkat bajar kapat.'

Ravidas : *Raga Gauri Bairagni, Adi Granth*, p. 346

CHAPTER 7

PLACE OF RAVIDAS IN INDIAN HISTORY

IN MEDIEVAL times the society was caste-ridden. The *Kshatriyas* had been the patronizers of the *Brahmanas*. The *Vaishyas* were tolerated because they kept the society moving by producing corn and by engaging themselves in industry and other such like works. Hence they were known as caterers of the society. The *Sudras* practically enjoyed no status and were looked down upon by other Hindu classes. But it is very strange that Ravidas who was born in the lower stratum of society, came to be known as a renowned saint and 'his celebrity spread in all the four directions.'¹

Ravidas surpasses all other contemporary saints in matters of following. His followers are spread all over India. The census report of A.D. 1883 mentions various castes and tribes of the *chamars* in the undivided Punjab.² All these recognise Ravidas as their *Guru*.

*'Bhagat bhagat jag vajia chaunh chakkan de vich chamreta,
Pana gandhei rah vich kiila dharam dhoe dhor sameta
Jio kar maile chithre hira lal amolpleta
Chaunh varnan updesh da gyan dhyan kar bhagat saheta.
Bhai Gurdas, Var 10, Pauri 17, cf. Giani Narain Singh, Varan Bhai
Gurdas, Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh & Co., Booksellers, Bazar
Mai Sewan, Amritsar 1914, p. 212*

2, These tribes are as follows:

- | | | |
|------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. Jatia | 8. Mahmi | 15. Bains |
| 2. Raidasi | 9. Pundwal | 16. Ghameri |
| 3. Chander | 10. Jal | 17. Ramdasia |
| 4. Chauhan | 11. Batoi | 18. Bhuti |
| 5. Chamar | 12. Badhan | 19. Kathana |
| 6. Golia | 13. Sindhu | 20. Dhed |
| 7. Bhatti | 14. Hir | 21. Rahtis * |
| | | 22. Bunia |
| | | 23. Billai. |

Sir Denzil Ibbetson, *Panjab castes*
Language Deptt. Panjab 1970, pp. 297 & 301

In their struggle to obtain upward status many of these castes and tribes embraced Islam and Sikhism and abandoned their old occupations. Many of them 'received Sikh baptism (*pahul*) and became Sikhs. They gave up their mean occupations and took to other means of livelihood. They also changed their name and gave up as much social intercourse with the unconverted members of their tribe as they possibly could. Thus the Chamars on their conversion to Sikhism took the name of *Ravidas*, the first *bhagat* of their tribe, to show that they followed his example. 'Ravidasa' is the correct form of the word. But it was soon confounded with the name of Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, and pronounced Ramdasia. The word is still pronounced as Ravidasia by most of the Sikhs.'³

Sir Denzil Ibbetson writes:

'These men are called Ramdasia after Guru Ram Das, though what connection they have with him, I have been unable to discover. Perhaps he was the first Guru to admit Chamars to the religion.'⁴

Ibbetson's belief that they are called Ramdasia after the name of Guru Ram Das, is baseless, hence untenable. He himself admits that he has been unable to discover what connection they have with Guru Ram Das. His speculation that perhaps the latter admitted them to the Sikh fold and they came to be known as Ramdasia shows his ignorance of the social philosophy of the Sikh Gurus. There was never any restriction on any caste—low or high to join Sikh faith. Guru Nanak preached that even God had no caste.⁵ He further elaborated that in His Court caste and birth are not taken into account; honour and caste are determined by the acts of the individual.⁶ Hence,

3. A note by a Native Civilian Sardar Gurdial Singh, cf. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, *Castes of the Panjab*, pp. 268-69

4. *Ibid.*, p. 300

5. '*Jake rup nahi jat nahi mukh inasa*'

And again

'*Jake karm nahi dharm nahi nahi such mala.*'

Raga Parbhati I, Adi Granth, p. 328

6. '*Jat janam na puchiye sach ghar leho batai*

Sa jat sa pat hai heje karm kamai

Guru Nanak, *Raga Parbhati, Adi Granth*, p. 1330

Guru Ram Das was not the first to admit the Chamars to his fold, instead it was the first Guru who admitted them to Sikhism. In fact, the Sikh Ramdasias and the Hindu Ramdasias have common origin i.e. from Saint Ravidas—a Chamar himself.

The presence of the large number of Ravidasias all over India, shows the impact of Ravidas's teachings. There are many Sakhis regarding the life of Ravidas where he has been described as having supernatural and miraculous powers. None of these can be accepted as it stands. 'The inclusion of a miracle does not necessarily mean that the whole *Sakhi* must be rejected. In most cases this is required, but in others the possibility of a substratum of truth must be borne in mind. The use of this approach should not, of course, suggest that the legend 'possesses no significance and deserves to be wholly ignored. Legendry accretions frequently reflect the piety engendered by great religious figures and as such serve to communicate, in some measure, an impression of their power to attract and inspire.'

Wilson holds the view that Ravidas founded a sect called Raidasi sect. But circumstances render it difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether the sect still exists: the founder must once have enjoyed some celebrity, as some of his works are included in the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs....Some of his compositions also form part of the collections of hymns and prayers used by that sect at Banaras.⁷ It is also said that a sect of *Vaishnavas* (who are of high castes) also has faith in Ravidas. Such devotees also call themselves as Raidasis.⁸

'Ravidas is the second of the important saints'¹⁰ of *Bhakti* movement. When we study the history of this movement we observe that he was the first to condemn the four *varnas*. After

7. Tor Andrae, *Mohammad: The Man and His Faith*, New York 1960 p. 31. cf. WH McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 68

8. H.H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus* (Ed.) Ernest Rost Sushil Gupta Pt. Ltd. Calcutta-12, 1958 (Second Ed.), p. 65

9. Parkash Singh, *Bhagti Lehar, Bhagat Ravidas ate unhan di Bani, Ravidas Number of Panjabi Duniya*, p. 15

10. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford 1968, p. 154

Ramananda, he was the first to adopt Hindi as medium of his teachings. His predecessors made use of Sanskrit, which was known as *dev bhasha*. Indu Bhushan Banerjee maintains:

'So long as the appeal had been, more or less, to the intelligentsia the old texts had sufficed. Only re-interpretations had been necessary from time to time and Sanskrit was adequate to serve as the medium but the advent of Islam had changed the whole situation; the masses had now to be taken into confidence and the teachings administered in a language intelligible to them. This was why the teachers of the medieval *Bhakti* school took up the vernaculars as the medium of their instruction and propaganda.'

By the use of Hindi by the *Bhakti* saints, Hindi literature besides being enriched, had a powerful appeal for the people. Now, the general public could understand Ravidas's message.

Ravidas was a great revolutionary also. He had courage to point out many of the shortcomings of the society. It is always very difficult to say something about the futility of useless religious ceremonies and rituals. In case of Ravidas, it was more difficult because he himself was a low-born in the eyes of high-ups in the society. He was fully aware of the sanctity and significance assigned to the *Vedas* by the Hindus. He knew that their denunciation was not without risk. But he was bold enough to raise his voice against the scriptures, caste system and pilgrimage of holy places. He declared that uttering His Name was more important than the study of the *Vedas* and the *Puranas*.

By preaching against the prevalent ceremonialism and brahmanical domination of the Hindu society, Ravidas rendered useful service to the humanity. However, his biggest contribution was that he gave voice to the hitherto unrepresented part of society—the *Sudras*. He was instrumental in developing the human personality because the cyclic process of the universe, could not complete unless all the four *varnas* participated in it.

11. Indu Bhushan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, A. Mukherjee & Co. Calcutta 1972, (3rd Ed.); p. 141

Guru Ram Das was not the first to admit the Chamars to his fold, instead it was the first Guru who admitted them to Sikhism. In fact, the Sikh Ramdasias and the Hindu Ramdasias have common origin i.e. from Saint Ravidas—a Chamar himself.

The presence of the large number of Ravidasias all over India, shows the impact of Ravidas's teachings. There are many Sakhis regarding the life of Ravidas where he has been described as having supernatural and miraculous powers. None of these can be accepted as it stands. 'The inclusion of a miracle does not necessarily mean that the whole *Sakhi* must be rejected. In most cases this is required, but in others the possibility of a substratum of truth must be borne in mind. The use of this approach should not, of course, suggest that the legend 'possesses no significance and deserves to be wholly ignored. Legendry accretions frequently reflect the piety engendered by great religious figures and as such serve to communicate, in some measure, an impression of their power to attract and inspire.'

Wilson holds the view that Ravidas founded a sect called Raidasi sect. But circumstances render it difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether the sect still exists: the founder must once have enjoyed some celebrity, as some of his works are included in the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs....Some of his compositions also form part of the collections of hymns and prayers used by that sect at Banaras.⁷ It is also said that a sect of *Vaishnavas* (who are of high castes) also has faith in Ravidas. Such devotees also call themselves as Raidasis.⁸

'Ravidas is the second of the important saints'¹⁰ of *Bhakti* movement. When we study the history of this movement we observe that he was the first to condemn the four *varnas*. After

7. Tor Andrae, *Mohammad : The Man and His Faith*, New York 1960 p. 31. cf. WH McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 68

8. H.H- Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus* (Ed.) Ernest Rost Sushil Gupta Pt. Ltd. Calcutta-12, 1958 (Second Ed), p. 65

9. Parkash Singh, *Bhakti Lehar, Bhagat Ravidas ate unhan di Bani, Ravidas Number of Panjabi Duniya*, p. 15

10. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford 1968, p. 154

Ramananda, he was the first to adopt Hindi as medium of his teachings. His predecessors made use of Sanskrit, which was known as *dev bhasha*. Indu Bhushan Banerjee maintains:

'So long as the appeal had been, more or less, to the intelligentsia the old texts had sufficed. Only re-interpretations had been necessary from time to time and Sanskrit was adequate to serve as the medium but the advent of Islam had changed the whole situation; the masses had now to be taken into confidence and the teachings administered in a language intelligible to them. This was why the teachers of the medieval *Bhakti* school took up the vernaculars as the medium of their instruction and propaganda.'

By the use of Hindi by the *Bhakti* saints, Hindi literature besides being enriched, had a powerful appeal for the people. Now, the general public could understand Ravidas's message.

Ravidas was a great revolutionary also. He had courage to point out many of the shortcomings of the society. It is always very difficult to say something about the futility of useless religious ceremonies and rituals. In case of Ravidas, it was more difficult because he himself was a low-born in the eyes of high-ups in the society. He was fully aware of the sanctity and significance assigned to the *Vedas* by the Hindus. He knew that their denunciation was not without risk. But he was bold enough to raise his voice against the scriptures, caste system and pilgrimage of holy places. He declared that uttering His Name was more important than the study of the *Vedas* and the *Puranas*.

By preaching against the prevalent ceremonialism and brahmanical domination of the Hindu society, Ravidas rendered useful service to the humanity. However, his biggest contribution was that he gave voice to the hitherto unrepresented part of society—the *Sudras*. He was instrumental in developing the human personality because the cyclic process of the universe, could not complete unless all the four *varnas* participated in it.

11. Indu Bhushan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, A. Mukherjee & Co. Calcutta 1972, (3rd Ed.); p. 141

The age of Ravidas was an age of ignorance and strife. His message was a message of Truth. He laid stress on the Name. He condemned the path adopted by the Hindu as well as Muslim priests. He believed that certain external marks of holiness could not get one salvation. Wearing special type of garments, putting sectarian marks and turning of rosary beads were not required to get access to Him. In fact, it was all false pretension. He believes that God is the sole creator, sustainer and destroyer of the *srishti*. He is the Supreme judge to give verdict on the true and false. His light is present in Brahmana and Chamar. He has many names—Ram, Rahim, Rahman, Allah, Keshav, Krishna, Karim, Madhava and Mukanda. He is 'anadi' and 'anant'.¹² His omnipresence is inseparable from His immanence. Life and death is like acrobat's play which the Lord is playing with His creation. Those, who are unwise, are unable to understand this mystery.¹³

Ravidas also pointed out towards certain moral and ethic values which man should maintain. He spoke against the vice of drinking because its intoxication was ephemeral. Only the intoxication of the Name was permanent.¹⁴ He raised voice against blind faith as one loses his vision under its influence.¹⁵ He is harsh on such persons as betray and do not speak truth. One should not deal with such persons.¹⁶

Ravidas feels that the five adversaries: *Kam* (lust), *Krodh* (wrath), *Maya* (wealth), *Mad* (pride) and *Matsar* (jealousy) have deprived man of his morality, ethic and virtue.¹⁷ Another formidable adversary is *haumai* (ego or I-am-ness). Unless it

12. Ravidas : *Sakhis* 55-63, pp. 58-65

13. *Ibid.*, *Sakhi* 83, p. 86

14. Ravidas *madura ka pijiyee jo chareh charch utrave*
Nav maharas pijiyee jo chareh nahi utraye.
Ibid., *Sakhi* 35, p. 35

15. *Jahan andh bisvas hai sat parakh tahan nahi*
Ibid., *Sakhi* 12, p. 33

16. *Jo nar satya na bhashein ar karhein bisasghat*
Tinhun so kabhu bhulhei Ravidas na kijhe bat.
Ibid., *Sakhi* 33, p. 34

17. *Kam, krodh, may a, mad, matsar in panchau mil bote*
Ravidas : *Raga Ramkali* I, *Adi Granth*, pp. 973-74

disappears, the Name in one's heart cannot take shelter. *Haumai* and the Name are incompatible to each other.¹⁸ From *haumai* results pride (*Ahankar* or *garab*)... *Haumai* is a subtle psychological barrier between man and God...and without this realization man remains chained to the cosmic circuit.¹⁹ This idea is akin to Guru Nanak's when he says in *Asa di van*

'In *haumai* he comes and in *haumai* he goes;
In *haumai* he is bom and in *haumai* he dies;
In *haumai* he gives and in *haumai* he takes;
In *haumai* he acquires and in *haumai* he castes away;
In *haumai* he is truthful and in *haumai* he lies;
In *haumai* he pays regards to evil or to virtue.'²⁰

Ravidas was a great humanitarian. He wanted to reform the society. It was his greatest concern that unless the evil of caste vanished, there was no possibility of national integration. He preached the great doctrine of Indian unity and endeavoured to knit together the Hindus and the Muslims. He provided spiritual dignity to those who had been kept at bay for centuries together. The place which Ravidas enjoyed among the contemporary saints did not give him any sense of pride. 'There is a recurring note of humility and confession' in his verses. He mentions his low caste again and again when he says:

'His caste is low, his lineage low and low is his birth'²¹ and again

18. *Jab ham hote tab tit nahi ab tu hai mein nahi.*
Ibid., *Sorath* I, *Adi Granth* p. 657

19. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 268

20. *Var Asa, slok 1 of pauri 7, Adi Granth.* p. 466

The translation is by V.V.H. McLeod (*Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 183)

21. *Merijat kamini pat kamini ochha janam hamara*
Raga Sorath, Adi Granth, p. 659

The translation is by Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, Vol. VI p. 326

'A doni, chandal or a Malechha becometh pure by worshipping God.'²²

Ravidas urged the need for honest "means of livelihood. Honest and hard labour never goes unrewarded. He was fully conscious of personal and social responsibilities; he exalted hard labour to the position of God. He himself earned his livelihood by taking up his caste profession.²³ He has, in several verses, referred to his low caste status as a chamar.²⁴

In *Raga Malar* he describes how the members of his caste carry away the cattle carcasses from Banaras.²⁵ Bhagat Dhanna also corroborates this fact.²⁶

From his verses we reach the conclusion that Ravidas holds a prominent place among the *bhagtas* of medieval times. His message is relevant even today. He belongs not to a particular Age or region. He belongs to posterity. He was one of the most illustrious sons of India.

APPENDIX I

Ravidas has, like the Sikh Gurus, used many incarnatory words for God in his forty verses, included in the *Adi Granth*.¹

(a) Ra, Raja Ram	21 times
Raja Ram Chand	Once
Raghunath	Once
(b) Hari (used in Sanskrit for Vishnu, Indra, Shiva, Brahma and Yamraj etc.)	24 times
(c) Madhava)	8 times
Murari) these are names	
Mukand) of Lord	Twice
Gobind) Krishna.	14 times
(d) Dev	4 times
Anant	Thrice
Karta	Once
Niranjan	Once
Satnam	Once
Prabh	Twice
Narain	Once.

22. Ravidas : *Raga Bilawal, Adi Granth*, p. 858, Tr. by Macauliffe Sikh Religion, p. 336

Nalidoz hanoz bebakhat kammi khijmatgar tumara

Ravidas : *Raidas ji ki Bani*, Belvedier Press (8th Ed.) 1971 p. 28

23. Ravidas : *Sakhi* 115, p. 118

24. *Ibid.*, *Gauri* 2, *Adi granth*, p. 345; *Gauri Bairagni I, Adi granth*, p.'346;

Gauri Purbi I, Adi Granth, p. 346; *Asa* 3, *Adi Granth*; p. 486

25. Ravidas : *Malar I, Adi Granth*, p. 1293

26. Dhanna : *Raga Asa 2, Adi Granth* p. 487

1. Prof Sahib Singh, *Bhagat Bani Steek*, Part II, Amritsar 1959, pp. 52-53

APPENDIX II

Different names of Ravidas

RAVIDAS IS known by as many as twelve different names.¹ These are: Ravidas, Raidas, Rayedas, Rudradas, Ruidas, Rayidas, Rohidas, Rohitdas, Ruhdas, Ramadas, Ramdas and Haridas. This variance has led to a controversy as to whether these are the different names of Sant Ravidas or that of different persons. In his own verses, Sant Ravidas has used 'Ravidas' and 'Raidas'. The forty hymns of the *Adi Granth* are most authentic. In them, two versions of his name are used—Raidas and Ravidas. On the testimony of the *Adi Granth*, it can be established that Raidas and Ravidas are two popular names of Sant Ravidas. The other versions of his name have been used by the persons other than Ravidas.

In almost all the verses compiled by Belvedier Press under the title *Raidas ji ki bani* the expression 'Raidas' appears². Many of its *Padas* are common with the *Adi Granth*. It further proves that Raidas and Ravidas is one and the same person.

'Ruidas' seems to be the Bangla version of 'Ravidas'. Dr. S.N. Dasgupta, in his book, *The Hindu Mysticism*, has written 'Ravidas' as 'Ruidas'. Meera Bai, who is supposed to be a disciple of Ravidas, has used only once in her *Padawali* 'Rohidas' as the name of her guru³. At other places she has

1. Sangam Lai Pandey, *Sant Raidas*, Sahitya Vani, Allahabad- 1970, p. 7, and also see (Dr.) Yogendra Singh, *Sant Raidas*, Akshar Prakashan P. Limited, Delhi, 1972.
2. *Raidas ji ki Bani* contains 87 *Padas* and 3 *Sakhis*.
3. 'Jlianj Pakliavaj venu pajiyajhalar no jhankar
Kashi nagar ma chauk ma mane pur milya Rohidas'.
The above *Pada* also confirms our point that Meera Bai met Sant Ravidas at Kashi.

written 'Raidas'. It seems that slight changes in spellings are made in order to maintain rhythm or metre. According to Sant Tukaram, Sri Ranade and Sant Vinoba Bhave, Raidas is also called 'Rohidas' by people⁴. Mahatma Rain Charan Kureel in his book, *Bhagwan Raidas ki Satya Katha*, has used the expression 'Ramdas', 'Rohitas', 'Rayidas', and 'Raidas' in place of Ravidas and Raidas⁵. Many chamar converts on their conversion to Sikh Faith, called themselves 'Ramdasia' or Ramdasi. It has led many to believe, though erroneously, that the Sikh chamars were initiated into Sikh fold by Guru Ramdas, the fourth master. The other Chamars in different parts of the country are still known as Ravidasi or Raidasi after the name of the great saint Ravidas.

Another name of Ravidas is 'Haridas'. According to Dr. Yogendra Singh, it was perhaps based on *Sant Sudhakar* edited by Viyogi Hari. In one of the *Sakhis* the name Haridas has appeared, perhaps in the sense of a servant of Hari.⁷ No other source, contemporary or later has mentioned this version of Ravidas's name.

Those who believed that Ravidas was a disciple of Ramnanda also called him Ramdas after his name. Khem Das the Author of *Bhikta Pachisi* preferred to call him Rayedas. We see that Ravidas, Rayedas, Rayidas Ruidas, Ruedas, Rohidas, Rohitas, or Rehdas are more or less same in pronunciation. It is, perhaps, because of diversity of languages, spoken in different parts of our country. Raidas or Rayidas of Punjabi language, Ruedas or Ruidas of Bangla, Rohidas or Rohitdas of Marathi and Ravidas and Raidas of Hindi are one and the same person.

The different names of Ravidas prove nothing but all-India character and impact of his teachings.

4. 'Mira satgurudev ki karai vanda aas
tin chetan atam kahiya dhan bhagwan Raidas.'
cf. Yogendra Singh, *Sant Raidas*, p. 2.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
6. Ram Charan Kureel, *Bhagwan Raidas ki Satyakatha*, Kanpur B.S. 1997.
7. 'Sab sukh pavain jas tain
So Hari ju ke haas
Kou dukh pavain jas tain
So na das Haridas'.
cf. (Dr.) Yogendra Singh, *Sant Raidas*, p. 3.
8. Sangam Lai Pandey, *Sant Raidas*, p. 7.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ENGLISH

- ALBERUNI, *Alberuni's India*, (Translation) Edward C. Sachau, London, 1914.
- ARNOLD, THOMAS AND ALFRED GUILLAUMME *The Legacy of Islam*, ARORA, A.C., *Society as depicted in 'Asa di Var'* Punjab History Conference Proceedings Patiala, 1970.
- ASHRAF, KANWAR MUHAMMAD, *The Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan (1200-1526)*, Vol.I.
- BAL, S.S., *Life of Guru Nanak* Publication Bureau, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1969.
- BANERJEE, A.C., *Guru Nanak And His Times*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1971.
- BANERJEE, INDU BHUSHAN, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, A. Mukherjee & Co., Calcutta, 1972 (3rd Edition).
- BRIGGES, G. W., *The Chamars*, Religious life of India Series.
- CHHABRA, G. S., *Social and Economic History of the Punjab (149-1901)*, Jullundur, 1962, Ph D. Thesis approved by the Panjab University.
- Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary*, 1950 Edition.
- CHOPRA, P.N., *Impact of Islam on Indian Society*, an article contributed to *Studies in the Cultural History of India*, Edited by Guy S. Metraux and Francois Crouzet, Agra, 1955.
- CHOPRA, P.N., *Social Life During the Mughul Age, (1526-1707)* Shiva Lai Aggarwala and Co., Agra, 1962.
- CHOPRA, P.N., *Society and Culture during the Mughul Age*, Agra, 1963.
- Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1955 Edition.
- DAMODRAN, K., *Bhartiya Chintan Parampara*, People's Publishing House, Delhi, (year not given)
- Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Luzac and Co., London, 1933-34.
- FAZAL ABUL, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. III (Translation), J.S. Jarret 1894, Revised by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 1948.
- FAZAL ABUL, *Akbar Nama*, Translation H. Beveridge, Vol. II, 1904.
- GHOSAL, U.G., *Struggle for Empire*.
- GREWAL, J.S., *Guru Nanak in History*, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1969.
- GURBACHAN SINGH, *Vaishnavmat te Bhagat Ravidas ji* (Unpublished dissertation) Punjabi University, Patiala.
- HABIB, MUHAMMAD, In Introduction to *Fatwa-i-Jahandari*.
- HABIB MUHAMMAD and KHALIQ AHMAD NIZAMI (Edited) *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. V, *The Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)*, People's Publishing House, Delhi, 1970.
- HASTINGS, JAMES, *Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics* (Ed.), Vol. XII.
- HUGHES, T.P., *Dictionary of Islam*, London, 1885.
- HUSSAIN, YUSUF, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1957.
- IBBETSON, SIR DENZIL, *Panjab Castes*, Language Department Punjab, Patiala, 1970.
- KUMAR, RAJ, *Origin and Development of the Bhakti Concept From Ancient Time up to Guru Nanak*, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, 1969.
- LAL SINGH, GYANI, SANGRUR *Vaishnavmat te Sikh Dharam*, Patiala, 1968.
- LAL, K.S., *Nature of Medieval Indian State*, Proceedings of a Seminar held at Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1966.
- LOUIS RENOU, *Hinduism* (Ed.) Prentice Hall International, London, 1961.
- MACAULIFFE, M.A., *The Sikh Religion : Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Author?*, Vol. VI, Oxford, 1909.
- MAHADEVAN, T.P.M., *The Age of Imperial Unity*.
- MAZUMDAR, B.P., *The Socio-economic History of Northern India*, K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1960.
- MCCLEOD, W.H., *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1968.
- MURRAY and Tnus, *Islam in India and Pakistan*, Calcutta, 1957.
- NICHOLSON, R.A., *The Idea of Personality in Sufism. Studies in Islamic Mysticism*.
- NIZAMI, KHALIQ AHMAD, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics In India During the 13th Century*.

- PANDEY, RAJ BALI, *Hindu Samskaras—A Socio religious Study of The Hindu Sacraments*, Vikram Publication, Bhadaini Banaras, 1949.
- PANDEY, A.B., *The First Afghan Empire in India (1451-1526)* Calcutta 1956.
- RAY, NIHARRANJAN, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, Munshiram Manohar Lai, Publishers, New Delhi, 1975 (2nd Revised Edition).
- SAKSENA, S.K., *Moral Philosophy of India* in an article contributed to *Studies in the Cultural History of India*, Agra, 1965.
- SALE, GEORGE, *Quran* (Translation).
- SARKAR, SIR JADUNATH, *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III.
- SHUSTRI, A.M.A., *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, Vol. II.
- SINGH, BHAI SAHIB, *Bhagat Bani Steek*, Part II, Singh Brothers, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, 1959.
- SINGH, DARSHAN, *Indian Bhakti Tradition and the Sikh Gurus*, Lyall Book Depot, Ludhiana, 1968.
- SINGH, DARSHAN, *The Ninth Nanak—A Historical Biography*, K. Lai & Co., Jullundur, 1975.
- SINGH, GYANI NARAIN, *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, Bhai Jawahar Singh. Kirpal Singh, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, 1914.
- SINGH, KHAZAN, *Philosophy of Sikhism*, Panjab Language Department, Patiala, 1970 (Reprint).
- SINGH, KHUSHWANT, *Hymns of Guru Nanak* (Translation) 1970.
- SINGH, MANMOHAN, *Hymns of Guru Nanak*, Language Department Punjab, Patiala, 1972.
- SINGH, MOHAN, *An Introduction to Punjabi Literature*, Amritsar, 1951.
- SINGH, NARAIN, *Guru Nanak's View of life*, Published by the Author, 26, Shivala Road, Amritsar, 1969.
- SMITH, MARGARRET, *Al-Ghazali, The Mystic*.
- SRIVASTAVA, A.L. *Medieval Indian Culture*, Shiva Lai Aggarwala and Co., Agra, 1964.
- SRIVASTAVA, A.L., *The Sultanate of Delhi*, Shiva Lai Aggarwala & Co., Agra, 1964 (4th Revised Edition).
- SUNDARARAJAN, K.R., *Hinduism—Historical Survey*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969.
- TARA CHAND, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1936.

- THAPAR, ROMILA, *A History of India*, Vol. I, Penguin Books 1972.
- TRIPATHI, R.P., *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad, 1936.
- UPADHIYA, BALDEV, *Bhartiya Darshan*, 7th Revised Ed., Kashti, 1966.
- WILSON, H.H., *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, Edited Ernest Rost, Susil Gupta Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1958.

HINDI

- AZAD, ACHARYA PRITHVI SINGH, *Guru Ravi Das*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1975.
- AZAD, ACHARYA PRITHVI SINGH, *Ravidas Darshan*, Sri Guru Ravidas Sansthan, Chandigarh, 1973.
- BAI, MIRAN, *Miran Bai ki Padavali*, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag.
- CHATURVEDI, PARASHU RAM, *Uttari Bharat ki Sant Paramvara*. Allahabad, B.S. 2020 (Revised Edition).
- Hindi Sahitya Ka Brihat Itihas* (B.S. 1400-1700) IV Vol Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Kashi, B.S. 2025.
- Hindi Vishva Kosh*, Vol X, Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Varanasi. 1968.
- JAIN, VIMAL KUMAR, *Sufimat Aur Hindi Sahitya*, Atma Ram & Sons, Delhi, 1955.
- KUREEL, MAHATMA RAM CHARAN, *Bhagat Ravidas Ki Satya Katha*, Kanpur, B.S. 1997.
- MAIM, DHARAM PAUL, *Madhya Kalin Nirgun Chetna*, Lok Bharati Prakashan, Mahatama Gandhi Marg, Allahabad, 1972.
- MAINI, DHARAM PAUL, *Santon Ke Dharmik Vishvas*, Navjot Publication, Malerkotla, 1966.
- MAJITHIA, SUDARSHAN SINGH, *Sant Sahitya*, Rup Kamal Prakashan, Delhi, 1962.
- PANDEY, SANGAM LAL, *Sant Ravidas*, Sahitya Vani, Allahabad, 1970.
- RAVIDAS : *Raidas Ji Ki Bani*, Belvedier Press, Allahabad, 1971 (8th Edition).
- SINGH, GYANI AMAR, *Sharomni Bhakton ke Jiwan*, Translation M S. Batra, Amritsar, 1962.

- Srimad Bhagwad Gita (Exegesis)*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 23rd Edition, 1975.
- TIWARI, RAM PUJAN, *Sufimat Sad/tana aur Sahitya*, Gyan Mandal Ltd., Varanasi, B.S. 2025 (2nd Edition).
- VARMA, RAJ KUMAR, *Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmak Itihas*, Prayag Vishvavidyalaya, 4th Edition.
- YOGENDRA SINGH (Dr.) *Sant Ravidas*, Sahitya Vani, Allahabad, 1972.

PUNJABI

- Adi Granth*: Standard Pagination, 1430.
- ANAND, GYANI BARKAT SINGH, *Janamsakhi Sri Ravidas Bhagatji*, Bhai Kirpal Singh Jawahar Singh Booksellers, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, 1972 (4th Edition).
- BEDI, KALA SINGH, *Bhagat Ravidas da Bhagti Andolan Vich Sthan*, Ravidas Number of Punjabi Duniya, 1971 (Language Department Punjab, Patiala).
- JOTSHI, GYANI PRATAP SINGH, *Janamsakhi Brahm Gyani Bhagat Ravidas ji*, Bhai Buta Singh Pratap Singh, Amritsar, 1961.
- NABHA, BHAI KAHAN SINGH, *Mahan Kosh*, 1971 (2nd Edition).
- PARKASH SINGH, *Bhagti Lehar, Bhagat Ravidas ate Unhan di Bani*, Ravidas Number of Panjabi Duniya, Language Department Punjab, Patiala, 1971.
- Puratan Janamsakhi or Valaitwali Janamsakhi*, Principal Bagsun College, Gujranwala, (Year not given.)
- SETHI, J.S., *Bhagat Ravidas*, Sant Sipahi (Magazine) February 1958.
- SINGH, BHAI JODH, *Bhagat Ravidas—Jivni te Rachna*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1974.
- SINGH, GYANI NARAIN, *Janamsakhi Bhagat Ravidas ji*, Bhai Chatar Singh, Jiwan Singh Booksellers, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, (Year not given).
- SODHI, MANOHAR DAS MEHARBAN, *Puratan Janamsakhi*, known as *Pothi Sachkhand*, Khalsa College Library, Amritsar.

INDEX

- Abul Fazal, 30n, 32, 33n
 Abul Hanifah, 13
 Abu Yazid, 47
 Abu Nasir-al-Sarraj, 46
 Acharya, 56
 Achit, 54
 Adi Granth, 3, 4, 5n, 6n, 9n, 18n, 19n, 20n, 21n, 24n, 25n, 44, 46, 47, 48, 58n, 59n, 62, 67, 68
 Adiyar, 51-3
 Adm, 50
 Advaitvad, 54
 Afghanistan, 40
 Afrasiyale, 27
 Aghora panthi, 17
 Ahl-i-Qalam, 29
 Ahl-i-Daulet, 28
 Ahl-i-Murad, 28
 Ahl-i-Saraf, 29
 Ahl-i-Saadat, 28
 Aitireya, 55
 Ajapa jap, 49
 Akbar, 30
 Alauddin Shah, 41
 Alberuni, 30, 33, 34
 Al-Athri, 47
 Alauddin Khilji, 12
 Allah, 14, 21, 64
 Al-ghazali, 47
 Al-masudi, 46
 Alvar, 51-4, 57, 59
 Amir Timur, 40
 Amir-i-Koh, 41
 An-al-Haq, 47, 49
 Anant, 64
 Anadi, 64
 Anandatirtha, 54
 Anand Barkat Singh, 2n, 4n, 20n
 Anuloma, 31
 Anuvyakhyan, 55
 Aqiqah, 29
 Arati, 18
 Arail, 56
 Arjan Dev (Guru), 3
 Arora, A.C., 34n
 Arya Smajist, 15
 Ashraf, K.M., 28n, 32n, 33n
 Athara Sidhis, 21
 Avatar, 20, 57
 Avtarvad, 19
 Avadhuta, 17
 Avval, 50
 Ayurveda, 47
 Azad, P.S., 2n, 5n, 18n, 21, 22n, 58n
 Badaun, 41, 42
 Badhan, 60n
 Badkar, 50
 Baghdad, 46
 Bahisht, 14
 Bahlol Lodhi, 41, 42
 Bains, 60n
 Bal, S.S., 52n
 Balmiki, 36
 Bam Sufa, 46
 Banaras, 43, 44, 54, 57, 59, 62
 Banda, 50
 Banerjee, A.C., 18n, 39n, 40n, 43n
 Banerjee I.B., 63n .

- Barlas Turk, 40
 Barani Ziauddin, 13n
 Batoi, 60n
 Beadh, 50
 Beakal, 50
 Bebakht, 50
 Badbakht, 50
 Be-dianat, 50
 Bedi, Kala Singh, 3n
 Behrar, 50
 Bengal, 40
 Beni, 9n,
 Bhuti, 60n
 Bhakti, 24, 51, 53, 54, 56-9, 62, 63
 Bhakti Cult, 16, 24
 Bhakti marga, 16, 52
 Bhakti movement, 1, 16, 18
 Bhagta, 4, 61, 66
 Bhagwattatparyainirnaya, 55
 Bhagat, Dhanna, 6n, 66
 Bhagwat, 51
 Bhagwat Gita, 54
 Bhagwan, 53
 Bhai Dharam Singh, 2
 Bhai Gurdas, 60n
 Bhai Kahan Singh, In
 Bhakatmal, 56n
 Bhaskara, 54
 Bhakat pachisi, 69
 Bhedabheda, 56
 Bhim, 54
 Bhoj Raj, 7
 Billai, 60n
 Bisiar, 50
 Bismillah, 30
 Brahma, 5, 7, 26, 35, 53, 56, 59, 67
 Brahmana, 51, 58, 60
 Brahm Sutra, 34, 54
 Brahm sutra bhashya, 55
 Brahm Samparda, 54, 55
 Brat, 21
 Brigges, G.W., 6n
 Buddhism, 52, 53
 Bunia, 60n
 Carmathians, 28
 Chabra, G.S., 32n
 Chengiz Khan, 27
 Chamar, 5n, 60-2, 69
 Chander, 60n
 Char Khani, 21
 Chauhan, 60n
 Chaturvedi, Parshu Ram, 5n, 8n, 9n
 Chemistry, 47
 Chhatarpati, 45
 Chhandogya, 55
 Chit, 54
 Chillah-i-maqus, 29
 Chittore, 8
 Chopra, P.N., 10n, 27n, 28n, 33n
 Damodaran, K., 51n
 Dar-ul-Harb, 14
 Darshan Singh, 7n, 12n, 19n, 40n, 54n
 Dar-us-Surur, 43
 Das Gupta S.N. (Dr.), 68
 Deccan, 52, 53
 Dehra, 36
 Delhi, 28, 29, 40-3
 Depalpur, 41
 Dev, 67
 Devbhasha, 63
 Dhed, 5n, 60n
 Dhanna, 9n
 Dharam Das, 2
 Dhurbinia, 1, 2
 Diari, 1
 Didar, 50
 Divya prabandham, 53
 Diwan, 32
 Dozakh, 14, 50
 Dvait, 55
 Duija, 31
 Dwarka, 36
 Dwapar, 21
 Farid Shah, 41n
 Farishta, 50
 Fatehpur, 30
 Faqr, 49
 Firoz Tughlaq, 13, 39
 Fiqh, 14
 Futuh-at-i-makkiya, 49
 Gadyatirya, 54
 Ganga, 20
 Gauka, 21
 Gauri Purbi, 6n
 Gauri Bairagin, 6n
 George Sale, 14n
 Ghameri, 60n
 Ghor tap, 22
 Ghosal, U.C., 31n
 Girdawar, 32
 Gita, 37
 Gita Tattparyainirnaya, 55
 Gobind, 19, 67
 Golia, 60n
 Granth, 2, 3
 Greek, 10
 Grewal, J.S., 10n, 17n, 22n, : 32n, 42n, 43n, 58n, 65n
 Gujarat, 40
 Gumrah, 50
 Gunahegar, 50
 Gupta, 52
 Gurbachan Singh, 56n
 Gurdial Singh, 61n
 Gurudatt Bhawen, 3
 Guru, 50, 56, 58-60
 Guru Nanak, 5, 9, 10, 22, 24, 38, 43, 61, 65
 Gyan Marga, 16
 Gyander, 56
 Hadis, 14
 Hafto-nuh, 30
 Haj, 14
 Hankar, 65
 Hanoz, 50
 Hanuman, 54
 Haq, 48
 Hari, 19, 57, 67, 69
 Haridas, 68, 69
 Haridwar, 36
 Haumai, 25, 50, 64, 65
 Hazra-Hazur, 50
 Hindi, 63, 69
 Hir, 60n
 Hughes, T.P., 11n, 30n
 Huns, 10
 Husain Shah, 42
 Iban Tustri, 47
 Ibrahim Shah, 42
 Ibbetson Denzil, 5n, 60n, 61
 Id, 30
 Imam, 13
 India, 66
 Indra, 67
 Islam, 61
 Ishwar, 54
 Ishq, 50
 Ismailis, 28
 Iqtas, 39
 Jainism, 52, 53
 Jal, 60n
 Jalaluddin Firoz Khilji, 27
 James Hastings, 46n
 Jami, 46
 Janam Sakhi, 2, 4, 8, 20, 23
 Jasrath, 41
 Jaunpur, 40, 42, 43
 Jnan, 54
 Jawala, 50
 Jaziah, 12
 Jehangir, 13
 Jhali Rani, 8
 Jihad, 14
 Jodhpur, 7
 Jogis, 23
 Jullundur, 41
 Junaid, 47
 Kaba, 22
 Kabir, 4n, 9n, 36, 39
 Kabir Panthis, 57
 Kafir, 28
 Kailash, 22, 57
 Kali, 21

- .g Kam, 64
 Kamdhenu, 21
 Bark- Karim, 21,64
 Bara Karam Kand, 20,26
 Bato Karma marga, 16
 Bead Kapalikas, 17
 Beak Karla, 67
 Beba Kashmir, 41
 Badt Kashi, 8,36
 Be-d Kath, 55
 Bedi Kathana, 60n
 Behr Kaunsadevi, 2
 Bern? Keswar, 64
 Beni Khauf, 49,50
 Bhut Khaliq, 21,48,50
 Bhak Kharaj, 12
 Bhai Khendas, 69
 Bhai Khanqah, 29
 Bhai Khavand Mir, 28n
 Bha; Khiraj, 44,45,50
 Bhaj Khizer Khan, 40, 41n
 Bhai Khidmetgar, 50
 Bhai Khilji, 42
 Bhai Khokhar, 41
 Bha Khutba, 40,41
 Bhai Khushwant Singh, 25n
 Bha Koil, 42
 Bha Krishna, 7, 19, 51, 56, 57, 64, 67
 Bha Krishnate, 20
 Bha Krodh, 64
 Bha Krta, 21
 Bhe Kshatriya, 31,32,34, 35, 51, 52, 60
 Bhii Kudki, 7
 Bho Kufr, 14
 Bill; Kushan, 52
 Bisii
 Bisr
 Bra Lahore, 41
 Bra Lakshmi, 54,57
 Bra; al, K.S., 11n, 12n
 Bra; i *sinsh* Gyani, 57n
 Bra Lehartara, 5
 Bra Lingam, 53
 Brij Lodhi, 32
 Bud Lohe-Mehfuz, 47
 Bun Lord Krishna, 7
 Louis Renon, 51n, 53n
 Macauliffe, M.A., In, 18n, 23, 57n
 Mad, 64
 Madrasah, 12
 Madhi, 19
 Madhva, 55,57, 64, 67
 Mahabharata, 14,51
 Mahabliarttatparyanirnya, 55
 Mahadevan T.P.M., 51n
 Mahmi, 60n
 Mahmud of Ghazna, 10,30
 Mahmud Shah, 40,42
 Mahatma Ram Charan Kureel, 2n
 Mahal, 45
 Mahshar, 14
 Malwa, 40
 Mallu Iqbal, 40
 Mandva Deeh, 5
 Mansur, 47
 Manu, 33
 Manusmriti, 21n
 Maqtab, 12, 30
 Mardana, 9
 Marifat, 49
 Masjid, 36
 Mashuq, 49
 Mathura, 36
 Matsar, 64
 Maya, 54, 64
 Mazumdar, B.P., 10n
 Merta, 7
 Mesopotamia, 40
 Miran Bai, 7n, 8
 Mimansa, 15
 Miran, 32
 Mohan Singh, 43n
 Moksha, 16, 22
 Mona, 32
 Mangol, 40
 Mubarak, 41
 Mubarak Shah, 41
 Muhammad Habib, 11n, 39n
 Muhammad Shah, 41
 Mulakdaris, 57
 Mulhids, 28
 Mulmantra, 25n
 Mulla, 22,38,46
 Multan, 41



Ravides temple at Chittor

Car

Barla
 Barar
 Batoi
 Bead
 Beak
 Bebal
 Baddb
 Be-di
 Bedi,
 Behr
 Beng
 Beni,
 Bhut
 Bhak
 Bhak
 Bhak
 Bhak
 Bhag
 Bhag
 Bhag
 Bhag
 Bha
 Bha
 Bhai
 Bha
 Bha
 Bha
 Bha
 Bha
 Bha
 Bhe
 Bhi
 Bhe
 Bill
 Bisi
 Bist
 Bra
 Bra
 Bra
 Bra
 Bra
 Bra
 Bri
 Buc
 Bur

Car



Foot-prints of Sant Ravidas at Chittor palace temple. Miran Bai is said to have worshiped these foot-prints daily.

The holy temple at Mandua Deeh (Varanasi); The birth place
of Sant Ravidas.

- Mukand, 57, 67
 Murari, 57,67
 Murray & Titus, 28n
 Munshi, 32
- Nabhadass, 8
 Naib-i-Mumimin, 41
 Nalanda, 15
 Nalaiyarprasandham, 53
 Namdev, 1, 4n, 9, 19, 22, 36, 56
 Namaz, 14
 Nandi, 52
 Naradji, 56
 Narayart, 57, 67
 Narain Singh (Gyani), 20n, 60n
 Narpati, 45
 Nathapanthis, 17
 Nav-nidhi, 21
 Nayhar, 52
 Nepal, 42
 Nicholson, R.A., 47n, 48n
 Nimbarka, 56
 Niranjana, 67
 Nirguna, 19
 Nirguna Bhakti (Bhagta), 6, 7
 Nizami, K.A., 29n, 39n
 North Bihar, 42
 Nyaya, 15
- Padas, 7, 9, 68
 Padampuran, 56n
 Pegumbar, 50
 Pahul, 61
 Pahul of Khanda, 2
 Panipat, 41
 Pandey, A.B., 42n
 Pandey, Rajbali, 32n, 33n
 Pandey, Sangam Lai, 68n
 Pandit, 22, 38
 Panjab, 17
 Panah, 9, 17, 32,41,43, 50, 60
 Panchbhedha, 55
 Pancharatra, 51, 54
 Parmanand, 4, 5, 17, 58
 Parasmani, 24, 50
- Parkash Singh (Prof-), 2n, 3n, 62n,
 Partap Singh (Gyani), 20n
 Partantar, 55
 Parthians, 10
 Prayag, 56
 Pathshala, 32
 Patshahi, 45
 Pavan Puttra, 54
 Pir, 30, 50
 Puja, 49
 Pothi sachkhand, 9
 Prabandh Sudhakar, 54
 Prabhhu, 67
 Pradhin, 45
 Prapatti, 16, 54
 Pratiloma, 31
 Pritam, 49
 Prophet, 13
 Priyadas, 8
 Prapanchinithyatav-nirnaya, 55
 Pulsirat, 21
 Pundwal, 60n
 Puranas, 18, 21, 36, 54, 57,67
 Puratan janamsakhi, 9n, 38
 •
- Qadar, 21, 50
 Qalandar, 29
 Qanungo, 32
 Qazi Maghiruddin of Bayana, 12
 Qazi, 12, 28, 46
 Quran, 14n, 47
 Quranic Law, 13
- Radha, 57
 Raga Asa, 4, 6n, 19n, 65, 66n
 Raga Bhaiso, 20n
 Raga Bilawal, 66n
 Raga Dhauasali, 18n, 19n, 21
 Raga Gauri, 6n, 40, 44, 66n
 Raga Gauri Bairagin, 20n, 21n,
 24n
 Raga Gauri Purbi, 66n
 Raga Gujri, 18n, 24n
 Raga Kedara, 21n
 Raga Malar, 6n, 19n, 21n, 57, 66

Raga Prabhati, 61 n
 Raga Ram Kali, 64n
 Raga Sorath, 6n, 19n, 21n, 25n, 49n, 50n, 65n,
 Raga Suhi, 25n
 Raga Shri, 49n
 Raghu, 1, 2
 Raghu Nath, 67
 Rahim, 21, 64
 Rahman, 64
 Raidas, 22
 Raidasi, 60n, 62
 Raj, 45
 Raja, 45, 49
 Raja Ram Chand, 6n, 19, 45
 Raja Ram, 45, 67
 Raj Raja Chola, 52
 Raj Kumar, 24n, 59n
 Ram, 17, 19, 51, 57, 58, 64
 Ramaite, 20
 Ramanuja, 4, 16, 17, 53, 54
 Ramdas, 68, 69
 Ramdass, (Guru) 61, 62, 69
 Ramayana, 14
 Ramdasias, 32, 60n, 61, 62, 69 «
 Ram Janaki, 6
 Ranade, 69
 Rama Nand, 1-4, 17, 18, 56, 58, 63
 Ramanuji Srivaishnawas, 54
 Ramzan, 13
 Rao, Jodha, 7
 Rattia, 32, 60n 2
 Rattan Singh Rathore, 7
 Ravidas, 1-11, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27, 34, 36, 39, 43, 46, 48-51, 58-61, 64-69,
 Ravidas Darshan, 3n, 5n, 18n
 Ray, 46
 Ray, N.R., 16n, 17n, 22n, 58n
 Rayedas, 68, 69
 Rayidas, 69
 Rehadas, 69
 Rehman, 21
 Ridhi-Sidhi, 23
 Rishis, 54
 Riza, 49
 Rohidas, 68
 Rohitdas, 68, 69
 Roza, 14
 Rudeadas, 68
 Rudeasamparda, 58
 Ruhdas, 68
 Ruidas, 68, 69
 Sabr, 49
 Sachan, Edward, 31n
 Sadhana (Nai), 4n, 36
 Sadhu, 37
 Saft-ul-kifa, 46
 Saf, 46
 Safa, 46
 Saguna Bhakti, 7, 19
 Sahib Singh, 67n
 Sahaj Bhakti, 20
 Sahgram, 20, 23
 Sakhis, 2, 3, 18n, 20
 Salim, 30
 Sama, 36
 Samas, 29
 Samarkand, 40
 Samskaras, 32
 Sankara, 54
 Sanskrit, 63
 Santokha, 1
 Santokh Das, 2
 Sankhya, 15
 Sanak Samparda, 56
 Sanatni, 15
 Sangram Singh (Rana), 7, 8
 Sant Karpa das, 2
 Sant Sudhakar, 69
 Sarhind, 41
 Sarkar Jadhunath, 11n, 14n, 33n
 Satnam, 67
 Satwant, 51
 Sayyid, 28, 40, 42
 Sayeed, M.M., 42n
 Sayid Sen, 4n
 Saxena, S.K., 32n
 Senapanthis, 57
 Sethi, J S-, 5n
 Sehajyani Buddhists, 17
 Scythians, 10

Shaiva, 67
 Shaivism, 51
 Sankracharya, 16, 54
 Shab-i-barat, 30
 Shah Rukh, 40
 Shaikh, 29, 50
 Shara, 12, 13, 14, 48
 Sharnagti, 54
 Sharqi, 42, 43
 Shahna-i-Shahr, 41
 Shakti, 52
 Shahukara, 32
 Shastra, 21
 Shiang, 28
 Shiva, 26, 52, 53, 59
 Shivaratri, 30
 Shudhadvaitavad Martand, 56, 56n
 Shukr, 49
 Shustry, A.M.A., 50n
 Sindhu, 60n
 Sind, 27, 40
 Singhasan, 45
 Sikhism, 61
 Sikandar, 52
 Sikh Gurus, 67
 Slokes, 4
 Srivastwa, A.L. (Dr.), 3n, 4n, 7n, 11n-13n, 16n, 17n, 27n-29n, 40n, 44n, 48n, 58n
 Smriti, 21, 32
 Smith Margaret, 47n
 Soahni, 49
 Sodhi, Manohardas Meharban, 9n
 Solah Sringar, 30
 Sofia, 46
 South, 52, 54, 56
 Sribhashya, 54
 Srishti, 64
 Sri sect, 56
 Sri Vaishnava Samparda, 54
 Sudra, 17, 21, 31, 32, 35, 60, 63
 Suf, 54
 Sufa, 56
 Sufi, 27, 28, 46-50
 Sufism, 32
 Sultan Nasiruddin Muhamand Tughlaq, 40
 Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlak, 42
 Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin, 41
 Sultana Sultan, 45
 Sunnis, 28
 Sunnet, 30
 Sundararajan, K.K., 55n, 57n
 Syrin, 46
 Tara Chand, 53n
 Tasvis, 50
 Tauba, 49
 Tehsildar, 32
 Telang, 56
 Tirath Ishnan, 21
 Tilak, 56
 Tirthas, 14
 Tirumura, 52
 Thapar, Romila, 11n, 15n, 31n
 Thakur, 57
 Thomas Arnold & Alfred Guillaume, 49n
 Tirhut, 42
 Tripathi, R.P., 11n
 Treta, 21
 Trilochan, 4n, 9n, 36, 38, 56
 Trisul, 52
 Tukaram, 69
 Twakkul, 49
 Udandpura, 15
 Ullah, 21
 Ulema, 11, 13, 28
 Ulugh, 28
 Uttarpradesh, 42
 Vallabha, 56
 Vallabhacharya, 56
 Vaishya 31, 35
 Vaishnava, 3, 52-4, 57-9, 62
 Vaishnavism, 17, 51, 52
 Vaisheshika, 15
 Vaishnava Bhakti, 17
 Vashishtadvaitvad, 54
 Varanasi, 5, 6

- Varma, R.K., 2n
 Varna, 17, 30, 31, 58, 63
 Vasdev, 51
 Vayu, 54
 Vedas, 14-16, 21, 36, 63
 Vedanta 15, 20
 Vedarath, 54
 Vedic Mantras, 31
 Vedantsara, 54
 Vedic Pustakalaya, 2
 Veeran, 50
 Vikramasila, 15
 Vinoba Bhave, Sant, 69
 Vrindaban, 56
 Vishnutattavniraya, 55
 Vishishtadvaita, 17
 Vishnu, 1, 17, 19, 26, 51-3, 57. 59, 67
 Vishnuswami, 56
 Vivaha, 32
 Viyogihari, 69
 Vrihadarnayak, 55
 Wahdat-ul-wugid, 47, 48
 Wahdat-ush-shuhud, 47
 Wara, 49
 Wasl, 49
 Wilson, H.H., 4n, 8n, 17n, 62n
 Yagyopaveet, 20
 Yamraj, 67
 Yahyabin Muaz, 46, 48n
 Yoga, 15
 Yogi, 47, 56
 Yogendra Singh (Dr.), 68n, 69
 Yusuf Hussain, 12n
 Zakat, 14
 Zambil, 29
 Ziarat, 30
 Zimmi, 12, 13
 Zuhad, 49

1175
R19S55

A
A
0
1
2
5
9
1
7
7
2



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

SANT RAVIDAS
AND
HIS TIMES

of California
n Regional
y Facility

DARSHAN SINGH